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The Week

EUROPE faced the question of peace or war more directly, during the week ending December 29, than at any other time in the recent past. France and Great Britain sent simultaneous notes to Portugal, Italy, Germany and Soviet Russia protesting against further interference in Spanish affairs. At the same time, France is reported to have offered to Germany the return of two of her lost African colonies, plus other concessions, in exchange for a firm agreement to keep the peace in Europe. England's success in reaching an understanding with Mussolini to maintain the status quo in the Mediterranean has apparently left Hitler out on the end of a limb in relation to the Spanish situation. Spokesmen for him scoffed, on Sunday, at the idea that Germany was sending her fleet to Spain to free the ship "Palos," seized by the loyalists, or that 50,000 or 60,000 drafted "volunteers" are about to leave for the fighting area. . . . The Chinese tragi-comedy took an unbelievable turn during the week, when the kidnaped Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek returned to Nanking accompanied by his captor, Chang Hsueh-liang. Chang expressed eagerness to be punished for what he had done and Chiang insisted that, on the contrary, his was the blame for permitting himself to be caught. . . . The last treaties of naval limitation expire with the New Year and all the chief powers are preparing, or have already begun, heavy building. Japan, during the week, again put out feelers regarding a new treaty with the United States alone, to cover fortifications in the Pacific. . . . Dictator Batista of Cuba, according to schedule, removed President Gomez and substituted for him another puppet, Federico Laredo Bru. . . . The Indian National Congress met in a mood of bitter hostility to British rule.

WITH the coming of Congress only a few days off, the old familiar pressure to push the President to the Right or to the Left was resumed last week with full force. It was particularly urgent in regard to relief, with the conservatives demanding a new appropriation of not more than $250,000,000 or $300,000,000, whether this sum means starvation or not. The experts seemed inclined to agree that $750,000,000 is necessary as a minimum. . . . The new Congress is faced with a series of urgent problems including the renewal of about a dozen important emergency grants of authority to the President all of which expire within the next few months. . . . Battle lines are again forming for the fight over neutrality. The President and the State Department are reported to be heartened by the recent Supreme Court decision and to be in a mood to demand large discretion for the Executive, which many students of the subject believe would infallibly embroil the United States in the next war. . . . Washington correspondents report that an alarmingly large number of those "bright young men" who have done the real thinking behind most of the New Deal legislation are leaving the government service for various reasons, including the belief that Mr. Roosevelt intends to do nothing of importance in the way of reform from now on. . . . As the maritime strike dragged on, and large-scale conflicts loomed in steel, coal and elsewhere, several minor strikes in the automobile industry were settled. . . . California oil men, annoyed because that state refuses to hand over oil properties in the tidal area, appealed to

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the courts for a ruling that such property belongs to the federal government—perhaps remembering Messrs. Doheny, Sinclair and Fall.

THE last week's developments in China were of a sort that the Occidental mind finds hard to believe, and almost impossible to understand. The kidnaped Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek suddenly returned to Nanking accompanied by his kidnaper, Chang Hsueh-liang. The kidnaper seemed eager for severe punishment because of his crime; the kidnapee blamed himself for falling into the trap and was therefore inclined to deal lightly with General Chang. In one breath we are told that never was Chiang so popular with the Chinese masses, and that he is likely to be superseded as dictator. Conflicting interpretations of the kidnaping continued to fly about: it was inspired by Soviet Russia, it was inspired by Japan, it was a purely mercenary enterprise, it was the sudden irresponsible action of an opium addict, it was arranged by Chiang himself in order to record a hostility to Japan that could not be uttered diplomatically from Nanking. Of these five explanations the fourth perhaps fits the facts better than the others. In any case, the incident has not materially affected the overwhelming issue in the Far East: Japan's slow but implacable march across the Asiatic littoral.

THE United States' temporary neutrality legislation will expire this spring, and the new Congress must grapple with the question of a substitute. Washington dispatches report that Mr. Roosevelt and the State Department, encouraged by the recent Supreme Court decision emphasizing the powers of the Executive in foreign affairs, will seek a maximum of discretion for the President. Other groups in the House and, notably, in the Senate, are demanding a mandatory law. They point out, and it seems to us with reason, that if the President is given power to distinguish between aggressor and victim, we shall have in operation a concept paralleling the sanctions policy of the League of Nations which, whatever else might be said about it, would certainly not be neutrality and would be overwhelmingly likely to get us into war. Aside from this question there remains the issue as to what shall be included in the embargo provisions. Assuming that sale of munitions, and financial assistance, are prohibited, shall we prevent all trade with a belligerent, or only trade in excess of pre-war amounts, or only trade in contraband and if so, what items shall be included under that head? If some trade continues, shall American ships enter the war zone, and if not, shall we seek to protect American citizens traveling on vessels under other flags? Shall we seek to compensate American business men injured by our new policies, and if so, how? Does the country really want to keep out of war, even if doing so should prove expensive? During the past year, the urgently needed national debate on this subject has not taken place. We shall again have to improvise and it will be good luck and not intelligence if we improvise well.

FOR months before the American election, close observers of Cuban affairs reported that trouble was brewing on that island. It was said that President Gomez was to be ousted but that a delay had been arranged to aid the prestige of the Roosevelt administration, since everyone knows that this country has a large degree of influence over Cuban affairs. Now Gomez has been removed and another and more completely subservient puppet of a dictator (Batista) has been put in his place. The ostensible issue was Batista's desire for a tax on sugar, the proceeds of which would be used to establish more army-controlled rural schools in which Cuban children would be drilled in Batista's fascist principles. Meanwhile, civil liberty continues non-existent in Cuba. Political opponents of the regime are imprisoned or murdered; trade unions and professional associations are outlawed; nearly all higher education is suspended; budgetary deficits are met by issuance of new money; the press is strictly muzzled. It is an old story, but it must be said again, that for Cuban conditions the United States is chiefly to blame. The economy of the Island is ruled from Wall Street; its politics, from Washington. The best President Cuba has had in many years, Dr. Grau San Martin, was deposed because Sumner Welles, then American Ambassador, refused to give him support; Batista has flourished under the benevolent smile of Welles's successor, Jefferson Caffery. . . . At Buenos Aires, the United States has just agreed to a policy of complete non-interference in the affairs of other nations in this hemisphere. It will be interesting to see when the new policy begins in relation to Cuba.

IF ANY reader of ours is collecting examples of the technique of dictatorship, we invite his attention to the recent election in Peru, as bland an example of the nullification of democratic procedure as can be found. Under the Peruvian Constitution of 1933, political parties of an international character are banned, so when the election was held October 11 of this year the APRA Party was unable to vote for its candidate. But the Social Democratic Party had a candidate, Dr. Luis Eguigren, and the APRA Party supported him. With this support Dr. Eguigren, as the returns came in, began to forge ahead, and the other parties thereupon appealed to the National Electoral Board to disqualify the votes cast by members of the APRA Party. Congress convened, ruled that this was the law, and the election was declared void on November 4. But the term of the incumbent President expired December 8, and Congress decided that there might be trouble if another election were held immediately, so it prolonged his term for three years. Moreover, Congress itself would cease to function on December 8, so (instead of prolonging its own term) it voted the President legislative power and left the date

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for new elections to his discretion. The reasoning by which those in favor of it consider this procedure democratic is that although Dr. Eguigren was ahead of any other candidate, the other three together had a larger vote than he did, and besides there hasn't been any trouble since the decision of Congress, therefore the majority approve it.

ALTHOUGH denials have been forthcoming regularly from executives of the radio industry, and some noble and well publicized gestures have been made, there is probably no doubt in anyone's mind that censorship is exercised over the radio. The first serious investigation of the matter has now been carried out for the American Civil Liberties Union, and a pamphlet has been published that lists seventy selected instances of censorship since 1930. It is interesting to note that the most common reason given for the cancellation of a program is that it is controversial, though in some cases the subject is one that has already been discussed over the station—from the opposing point of view. The argument has some weight when the station points out that it may be used by offended persons, but this hardly applies to the taboo on all strike news issued to its news commentators by WLW of Cincinnati in 1935, or to the refusal of KDKA to broadcast a pacifist speech on Armistice Day, 1933, for example. The radio industry has, unfortunately, no tradition such as that of the press, and its fear of government retaliation (probably wholly unfounded), its prejudices, its own business interests and its fear of pressure groups and business in general are therefore only checked by the principles of certain individuals. Short of the development of a tradition of the freedom of the air we second the practical suggestion of the American Civil Liberties Union: legislation to provide a real open forum on the radio, to protect the radio companies, though not the speakers, against legal action, and to force the companies to keep public records of their transactions so that whatever censorship occurs is openly known.

COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE at Mena, Arkansas, fearing that recent attacks in the press and by the citizens' committee of Polk County may incite violent action against the school, has asked that a federal investigation be made of both Commonwealth and "reactionary activities in the county and state." Commonwealth is a labor school where students and teachers live, work and study together in an environment of extreme academic freedom to learn about the labor movement and how they may best render service to it. Its curriculum includes courses in Labor Orientation, Labor History, Organization of the Unemployed, Farm Problems, Trade Union Problems, Current Events, Political Economy, Journalism and Graphic Methods of Propaganda. The tuition is very low, and students—all of whom are supporting themselves—receive room, board and laundry in exchange for twenty hours of work a week at one of the communal tasks of the school. It is perhaps not surprising that Commonwealth should arouse antagonism in a state that is notorious for the low boiling point of its mob hysteria and the brutality of its mob action. The treatment of the sharecropper investigators last June is one of the most recent examples of the way in which Arkansas mobs behave toward people interested in the betterment of labor conditions in the South. Now that the Polk County citizens' committee has resolved to close the college in a "legal way" and, quite naturally, the college has protested, it is certainly time for an impartial committee to intervene and make sure that the issue is settled not only without violence but in accord with the principles of academic freedom and free speech.

SO MUCH of interest is happening in the Soviet Union that little attention has been given the extraordinary work that is being done in Moscow in the field of city and regional planning. In its December issue The Architectural Record describes the ten-year city plan for Moscow. The capital, one of the most rapidly growing cities of the world, is being expanded from 2,850,000 to 6,000,000 acres. In order to take care of the transportation needs of a city of that size (which would be 2.2 times greater than Los Angeles), an integrated system of arterial highways, both radial and concentric, and bus, subway and trolley lines capable of furnishing 4,000,000,000 rides a year are being developed. The boulevards which radiate from the city's center are also parkways which broaden as they approach the city limits and join with the peripheral parks, so that—provided there are no restraining laws—one may walk barefoot on the grass into the heart of the city. Housing is one of the main concerns of the planners. They estimate that 165,000,000 square feet of living space will be added to the city's housing accommodations during the next ten years. Perhaps the most striking feature of the plan is its decentralization. Industry is to be limited and scattered within the city's area in order to avoid the congestion of millions of workers converging every morning in the business center of the community. Moscow will be a composite of closely integrated units set in an environment of grass, water, light and air.

THE Alley Dwelling Authority in Washington, D. C., has just completed a low-cost-housing project that exemplifies a sensible approach to the problem. At the outset a careful distinction was made between slum reclamation and low-cost housing, two things frequently confused by well meaning idealists. To reclaim a slum is to tear down dwellings that are unfit for human habitation and then redevelop that area for its most logical use in its particular neighborhood, whether this be as a business block, a public playground, a parking space, high-rent apartment houses or whatever. Low-cost housing is a move to provide homes at low rentals, and the new quarters

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are built in former slum areas only if these areas happen to be the best available location. The members of the Alley Dwelling Authority proceeded on the principle that if housing is to be put on an enduring basis, costs must be held down, not written off. Consequently the Authority has sought no subsidy, has figured all costs, including the land itself, in its accounts and pays the government three-percent interest on all money borrowed. The project, consisting of twenty-three houses of which twelve are new and the rest reconditioned, seeks to provide dwellings for the lowest income group, not merely for a lower group. John Ihlder, executive officer of the Authority, says that after dwellings have been provided "at the lowest rental consistent with the avoidance of a deficit" it is up to relief to take care of those still unable to meet that minimum. The present project, known as Hopkins Place, rents for $6.25 per room per month. Mr. Ihlder is mistaken, however, if he believes that wages in the United States are high enough to enable many workers in the lower brackets to pay this much. And why is relief any better than a subsidy for housing?

SO SELDOM is the court decision in a case affecting labor and the problem of unionism a cause for rejoicing that we feel special mention should be made of Judge William H. Byrnes Jr., of the Civil District Court at New Orleans. In a case that arose over the attempt of Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen's Union, to revoke the charters of Locals No. 1226 and No. 231 and set up new puppet unions in their place, Judge Byrnes handed down a decision that blocked the "illegal annihilation," and then took pains to expose Ryan's lack of good faith. "There is no excuse for the formation of the new unions," said Judge Byrnes:

> Mr. Ryan made no attempt whatever to follow the rules of his union or organization in the formation of these new unions and the destruction of the old ones. Of all the persons in the world it was Mr. Ryan's duty to preserve and build them up. . . . Everybody in New Orleans knows that both of these men [the presidents of the locals] have been for years battling for the cause of unionism on the river front and it is unthinkable that their own International president should now without reason or cause desert them, destroy them and deliver them into the hands of their enemies.

THOSE of us who have been disheartened by the attitude that most of the movie-makers have taken toward labor, unionism and progressive activities in general should be encouraged by the increasing number and quality of motion pictures with liberal sympathies that are being shown. "Millions of Us," the talking short advocating trade-union membership which has been playing on Broadway for five weeks, was made in Hollywood by a company called American Labor Productions, composed of a group of Hollywood technicians who are working anonymously. The story of "Millions of Us" is elementary, but it bears the slick touch of professional Hollywood production. Frontier Films (formerly Nykino) has made a labor short called "The World Today," the first in a series of news reviews, somewhat on the style of "The March of Time." It treats the Sunnyside evictions of last year and the activities of the Black Legion. "Wanted, a Master," a satire with a dog as its chief character, was originally an amateur production, but Metro bought it, commercialized it, and in so doing removed most of its sting. The same group that produced "Millions of Us" is about to release a four-reel picture on the case of Tom Mooney. Perhaps the most important of the new films will be "Redes" ("Nets"), a picture of fishermen in a small Mexican village on the Gulf of Vera Cruz. This film, produced by Paul Strand, supervisor for the Mexican Department of Fine Arts, and acted almost entirely by natives of the village, shows the struggle of the fishermen against exploitation.

Wisconsin and Academic Freedom

THE PROBABILITY that the Regents of the University of Wisconsin will remove Mr. Glenn Frank as president has raised an issue that it is well for progressives to investigate carefully. The charge is made that this action is sponsored by Governor Philip La Follette and Regents whom he has appointed, because Mr. Frank is politically more conservative than the state administration and has expressed his views too freely in the press and on the platform. Conservatives have often argued that support for academic freedom arises not because those who protest against the discharge of dissenting professors really believe in freedom of teaching and expression, but because they agree with the dissenters and disagree with the authorities responsible for administration. In almost all such cases the dissenters have occupied a leftward position. Now, however, the shoe is on the other foot. If President Frank is cashiered because Governor La Follette is opposed to his political and economic views, and if progressives endorse that action, they can logically say little about academic freedom in the future.

Mr. Harold M. Wilkie, president of the Board of Regents, stoutly denies that Mr. Frank's political activities have anything to do with the question. He cites conservative regents who also believed Mr. Frank to be a poor president, and points to the long standing nature of the objections. Mr. Frank, he alleges, is raising the issue of academic freedom merely to keep his job. Six charges against his administration are listed by Mr. Wilkie as follows: (1) that he has mismanaged finances and is in general a poor administrator; (2) that he has lost the confidence of the faculty and others with whom he must deal; (3) that he has been lax and bungling

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in his executive action, showing an incapacity to make decisions; (4) that he has slighted university affairs to engage in speaking and writing of a nature not appropriate to his office, but for the purpose of enlarging his income; (5) that he has permitted questionable expenditure of public money for his household expenses, over and above his salary; (6) that he has been out of contact with university affairs and has dodged executive responsibility. These charges are submitted with a good deal of specified detail. The itemized account of expenses on Mr. Frank's house and automobile, outside of his salary, is for instance appended, and varies through five years between $11,571 and $16,513. These expenditures may have been entirely legitimate, but at least the charge is concrete and has nothing to do with politics.

The conservatives may well reply that authorities who dismiss a professor seldom admit that they are influenced by the professor's views, but instead charge that the victim is incompetent, that he is a poor teacher or lacks scholarship, or that he neglects his duties. Reasons assigned for dismissal are seldom taken in complete good faith by those chiefly concerned with academic freedom. The record is searched to see whether the authorities do in fact disagree with the professor and whether his utterances have caused them embarrassment. If so, it is either assumed that the other charges are trumped up to cover the real animus, or it is argued that while they may have substance, they do not justify the singling out of this particular individual as against others who have just as bad records in teaching or scholarship but have held different opinions. Sometimes, indeed, the argument seems to go so far as to assume that no matter what else may be said against a person who holds an academic position, he must not be deprived of it if it can be suspected that those in authority disapprove of his beliefs.

There is a good deal of excuse for even this extreme attitude, in view of the great pressure that may be exerted by dominant powers in favor of conformity, and the immense difficulty of disentangling true charges from false, genuine motives from those that are merely acknowledged. Academic freedom is worth defending even at some risk of academic inefficiency, especially in a period of rapid social change and growing intolerance. At the same time anyone who has ever delved into such an issue must admit that absolutely clear cases almost never arise, that universities have duties to their students and the public other than maintaining freedom of expression, and that decisions must rest on the careful weighing of a number of factors. If this were not so, anyone whose academic work was unsatisfactory could obtain permanent tenure for himself merely by being sure to make politically indiscreet remarks.

What we want to be certain of is, not that teachers and college presidents shall never be discharged on any grounds, but that on no account shall their opinions on public questions play a part in action against them. Whether in any specific case this is so is a matter requiring careful investigation and mature judgment. A number of questions ought to be examined—and among them the most important are: first, whether the authorities have ever tried to influence or suppress the public views of the subject; and second, whether other types of charges brought against him can be reasonably well substantiated.

In the case of Mr. Frank, it ought to be possible to examine the evidence on both these points. So far as we now know, neither Governor La Follette nor the Regents have ever tried to influence Mr. Frank's expression of political or economic opinions by means of their authority over his office. If they have done so, it ought to be possible to establish that fact. If they have not done so, the charge that this is a case involving academic liberty becomes a little thin. There remain the specific counts of incompetence and inattention as an executive. These are subtler matters, difficult for outsiders to judge. Nevertheless the hearing ought to develop some of the facts. Outside investigators at least ought to inquire into them carefully before expressing opinions. Perhaps the best way of reassuring public opinion concerning them would be, as The New Republic recently suggested, to poll the faculty. For ourselves, we do not feel able to say that college presidents should never be forced out, or that Mr. Frank's case does involve academic liberty. But while we fully recognize the responsibility of university regents to see that those under them do a good job, we believe that in a case of this kind it is particularly incumbent on a progressive administration to seek every possible means of demonstrating that their action is not biased by motives other than those they acknowledge.

Hitler's Decision

SENSATIONAL newspaper dispatches from Berlin, over the week-end of December 27, described Hitler as sitting alone in his mountain retreat at Berchtesgaden deciding the issue of war or peace for almost the entire world. The picture is somewhat overdrawn, but it does contain elements of truth. The whole European situation has been altered by the agreement Great Britain succeeded in making with Mussolini for maintaining the status quo in the Mediterranean, and by the subsequent offer of France to restore some of the German colonies taken away in 1919, in exchange for a promise on the part of the German government to keep the peace.

What Great Britain paid the Italians to swing them over from their understanding with Germany is not yet known; presumably the price was high. Part of it was no doubt registered when the British and French legations at Addis Ababa were reduced to consulates, an important first step toward recog-

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nizing Italy's conquest of Ethiopia. Whatever the total inducement, it was large enough to cause Italy to begin sending home her troops from the Balearic Islands, and to leave Hitler in a difficult position.

Reports from Berlin have said for some time that the Germans were at last beginning to realize that if the adventure in Spain were successful, Italy would probably get the lion's share of the reward. Germany in the meantime has supposedly been receiving some valuable raw ores, needed for armament, from the Iberian Peninsula, and has been banking on finally getting territory in North Africa of great strategic value. But things have been going badly for General Franco, and if Italy really does withdraw they will go still worse. Apparently the General has decided he cannot continue the war without putting 50,000 or more fresh German troops in the field.

It is a question whether Germany, in her serious economic and financial predicament, can finance such operations even if she could get around the bitter hostility of Britain and France to her entering the war on such a scale. Germany is short 1,000,000 tons of wheat and another 1,000,000 tons of other grain; rationing of foodstuffs has begun again, with fats as the first item; the series of drastic new restrictions on the population suggests a serious degree of internal discontent. While the dictators' handbook recommends a foreign war when things get as critical as this, the alternative policy of making peace also has its temptation. The colonies that France now proposes to restore are not of very great value, except psychologically; but Hitler has demanded their return so loudly and so often that the offer requires careful consideration. In addition, the British and French are putting forward the plan, which was reported by our Washington correspondent some weeks ago, for large loans to Germany and for removal of restrictions on foreign trade.

If Germany were to sign an agreement as France now demands, could she be expected to live up to it? In recent years she has been repudiating her "solemn obligations" right and left, not only those signed in 1919 with a pistol at her head, but other and voluntary arrangements. Probably no European statesman really expects that Germany can now be bribed into permanently abandoning her long cherished dream of attacking the Soviet Union, or for spreading Nazi dominance, economic and cultural, throughout Southeastern Europe and Asia Minor. From the standpoint of Great Britain, in particular, everything else is subordinated to gaining another year or so of peace, during which her own rearmament may be completed; and this policy also fits the view of the French government. The British believe that if they can only postpone war a little longer, their armed strength may then be sufficient to preserve peace indefinitely. It is a desperate gamble—but any of the alternatives presented is more desperate still.

The States and the Libraries

IN THE depression, public-library incomes have steadily decreased. Books on the shelves have worn out and have not been replaced; buying of new books has been drastically reduced and in all too many cases has completely ceased. In America as a whole 45,000,000 people, more than one-third of the population, are without library service of any kind. West Virginia is the worst state in this regard, 88 percent of the people there having no library service. In Arkansas 85 percent suffer a similar lack and in North Dakota it is 81 percent. At the other end of the scale, Delaware, the District of Columbia and Massachusetts are listed as providing complete coverage for the entire population, while New Hampshire, Connecticut and California provide library facilities for all but two percent or less of their population. In such states the central problem is not founding but maintenance.

While books and facilities are inadequate throughout the country as a whole, actual use of existing libraries goes steadily upward. A survey of thirty-one public libraries in the larger cities showed a gain of 22 percent in the circulation of adult non-fiction during the past five years. This effectively disposes of the hackneyed charge that libraries are used principally by indolent persons seeking "escape" fiction. In the present troubled times, more than at any other period in our history, people are turning to the libraries for enlightenment in the fields of science, sociology, history, etc.

Libraries are supported by a wide variety of arrangements: public and private bequests, popular subscription, local taxation, grants from foundations and various others. The only thing these methods have in common is the uniformity with which library income has been decreasing in recent years. Where supported out of public funds, most libraries derive their incomes from local real-estate taxes. Deflated land values and assessments have caused tax receipts to drop sharply, while the ever increasing taxation demanded by state and federal governments makes local authorities reluctant to raise either assessments or tax rates. The most sensible solution of the difficulty is for the state governments to establish grants-in-aid to local libraries and set up coördinated, statewide library systems. Movements in this direction, with encouraging results, already have been made by the states of Illinois, with an appropriation of $600,000, and Ohio, with $100,000, while New York for a number of years has granted state aid in small amounts. Proposals to establish or continue and extend such systems of state aid to libraries are definitely scheduled to come before the legislatures of Texas, Washington, North Carolina, Illinois, Ohio, Tennessee, Idaho, Michigan and West Virginia this winter, and will probably be introduced in at least eight other states. Few propositions that could come before any legislature are more worthy of prompt enactment.

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The Fight in Anthracite

GOVERNOR Earle has wisely decided not to send troops or state police into the anthracite region of Pennsylvania to end coal bootlegging. To do so would precipitate direct and bloody civil war. Instead, the Governor proposes that the State Legislature convening on January 5 shall create a fact-finding commission, endow it with ample funds for a thoroughgoing study and ask that four months or less from the date of its creation the commission shall devise and recommend a plan for solving the present difficulties in the hard-coal fields.

In the past four years a great deal has been spoken and written about bootleg mining. Unemployed miners, their means of existence cut off by the closing down of the mines, have sunk their own shafts on company property, have mined and marketed coal. This dramatic action, this assertion of the fundamental right to live, in seeming defiance of the hitherto sacred rights of property, has drawn considerable attention in itself, and the uproar has been immeasurably increased by the howls and shrieks of the large companies who say their entire business is being taken from them by the modern Robin Hoods of the colliery pits. In view of the extended hullabaloo, it will probably be a surprise to a large section of the public to learn that bootleg mining at the very most accounts for less than ten percent of total anthracite production and some estimates place it as low as two percent.

The real fight is about something else. One reputable authority, a mining engineer with thirty years' experience in the anthracite fields, has come forward with the suggestion that the uproar over bootleg mining is being used as a mask to hide a struggle between the railroads and the motor truck. As a background for this struggle, one should realize that virtually all the hard coal in the Western Hemisphere is concentrated in two counties in Pennsylvania and that between 85 and 90 percent of this coal is controlled by seven companies. They are known as "line" companies—a significant term, for it indicates their railroad ancestry. Prior to 1920, a Supreme Court decision forced the segregation of railroad and coal ownership, but since that time the banking groups controlling the whole situation have seen to it that the seven nominally separate companies have worked in excellent accord not only with one another but with the railroads. The bootleg miners of necessity have resorted to trucks, and have been strikingly successful in underselling the line companies. The anthracite-carrying railroads now fear that the practice of trucking will spread to the legitimate producers. This is a vitally important matter to the railroads, for anthracite rates are among the very highest of any rough freightage tariffs, and it is estimated that within a radius of 100 miles of the coal fields the railroad companies already have lost 60 percent of their coal-freight business. Thus, the theory is advanced that in the present outcry over bootleg mining the real complainants are not the anthracite-producing companies but the anthracite-carrying railroads. There are, of course, a great many other factors in the present status of the anthracite fields, but the railroads-versus-trucks analysis offers an approach that merits further investigation.

Arthur Brisbane

DURING the past twenty years we have often found it necessary to take issue—sometimes harsh issue—with Arthur Brisbane. It is not our purpose, now that he is dead, to carry our quarrel beyond the grave. There are some things, however, that must be said. Death, tempering the language of criticism, does not prohibit criticism itself.

We should be less than fair if we did not point out that Brisbane was gifted with a special kind of journalistic brilliance. A master of the stripped reportorial style, keen and alert, he spoke the simple language of millions of American people—especially those millions who read as they run. We should also be less than fair if we overlooked the fact that it was his dream to bring culture to the masses: and if his conception of culture was not ours—or yours—it does not negate his sincerity or his hope.

The duty of fairness, however, demands an examination of both sides of the coin. With all his gifts—his sense of the accurate word, his indefatigable energy—he never ventured beyond the horizons seen from the slopes of San Simeon. A good reporter, loyal to the man who gave him his chance, he made Mr. Hearst's battles his own. He was a militarist and an impassioned defender of the present order. His nuggets of wisdom, generally set in bold-faced type, were not always sound. His enthusiasms were often trivial and his great discoveries (that a prize-fighter was no match for a gorilla, for example) were equally so. A master in his field, he was also a master of the commonplace. He did not quite deserve his lifetime reputation and it will probably not long outlive his death.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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The Next Four Years in the TVA

This is the sixth in the series of articles on various aspects of the next four years of American life. Additional contributors will be Harry L. Hopkins on "The Next Four Years in Unemployment and Relief," Thomas Reed Powell on "The Next Four Years of the Constitution," Bruce Bliven on "The Next Four Years in Foreign Affairs," and George Soule, "The Next Four Years—A Summary."—THE EDITORS.

THE MESSAGE to Congress by President Roosevelt proposing creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority reflected a fairly clear social and political philosophy. The TVA Act as finally passed did not have that character in any such marked degree. It was chiefly a collection of directions and authorizations for doing certain specific things desired by various segments of the public. The philosophy requested in the President's message to Congress found expression chiefly in two short sections of the Act, which provide for study, experiment, demonstration and reports on various phases of social and economic planning. Later amendments have improved the Act, but the social and economic outlook, which in the public mind has come to characterize the TVA, was not so much imposed by the terms of the Act as it was developed in its application in an effort to realize the spirit and import of the President's message and of the general policies of the administration and of Congress.

As an illustration we may take the building of dams. Aside from providing that prevailing wages should be paid, the Act gave little direction as to the spirit and manner of the building. The construction might have been carried on with limited regard for health and working conditions. The advanced labor policy and labor conditions of the TVA are partly the result of the exercise of administrative discretion. Though wholly within the terms of the Act, they were not compelled by those terms. I believe it is true in general that, as must often be the case with public undertakings, some of the outstanding characteristics of the TVA are the result of reasonable discretion exercised in its administration. Many public undertakings can achieve distinctive character within existing legislative patterns by suitable exercise of entirely legal and allowable discretion. In my opinion a change in the quality of our social order depends as much on the spirit of administration as it does upon legislative structure.

The constitutional purposes which find expression in the TVA Act are: first, the development of interstate commerce through the improvement of navigation, including flood control; second, the promotion of national defense through the administration of government wartime properties at Muscle Shoals; and third, the generally recognized right of the government to inquire, demonstrate and report on matters affecting the public interest. The work of the TVA can be best understood by relating it to these main purposes.

The development of interstate commerce through the improvement of navigation is the key to the greater part of the TVA program. Under previous administrations Congress had formally adopted the policy of making the Tennessee River navigable to vessels of nine-foot draft from the head of the river at Knoxville, Tennessee, to its mouth at Paducah, Kentucky—a distance of about 650 miles. The TVA Act confirms that policy, but provides that, instead of a single-purpose development for navigation alone, the improvement of the Tennessee River shall also serve secondary purposes of flood control and power development. There are other important purposes to be served by such an improvement, including fisheries and recreation, which have not yet found adequate expression in legislation.

The unified control of the Tennessee River for navigation, flood control, power development and subsidiary purposes is a project of unprecedented magnitude of its kind. Three of the world's large dams have been completed and four more are under construction. Four others will be required and still others may be desirable to bring the project to full fruition. Except for the present federal program in our Western states, the TVA has under way the largest dam-building project ever undertaken. We are proud of the speed, economy and quality of work which have been achieved, and of the working conditions which have been maintained.

Navigation, Flood Control and Power

The program when completed will provide a channel for vessels of nine-foot draft from Knoxville to the Ohio River by means of nine dams with locks. Flood stages, which are a detriment to navigation, will be greatly reduced by storage above tributary dams, and low-water flow can be regulated by releasing that storage. Improvement to navigation and flood control on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers also will result. If the program is not interrupted, the next four years should see it well toward completion, though the construction of the last few dams will extend beyond that period.

Flood control on the Tennessee River definitely affects navigation by reducing violent and extreme fluctuations of water levels. In addition flood control is necessary to safeguard cities along the Tennessee River and to protect vast regions in the lower Mississippi delta. The Mississippi levees have about reached their maximum safe height, and further improvements, if possible, should include holding

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back waters in reservoirs. The unified control of the river system should include storage dams on the principal tributaries and on the main river itself. For the control of Mississippi floods, the most important TVA unit would be a great dam near the mouth of the Tennessee River, which would store several million acre-feet of flood water, and go a long way toward controlling floods on the lower Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The construction of that dam is a reasonable prospect to be begun during the next four years, but its completion would extend beyond that date. The construction of another large tributary dam, probably on the Little Tennessee River, would be valuable to control floods at Chattanooga, which is especially vulnerable.

Wherever a great dam is built on a large river, we have the setting for a hydro-electric power development. If the TVA program is not interrupted, four years from now the dams completed or under construction should be capable of producing perhaps three-quarters of a million dependable horsepower of electric energy. A program for the use of that power is partly outlined in the TVA Act, but to a considerable degree is left to the discretion of those who administer the statute. If this power supply is wisely and thriftily administered, the income from it may largely repay the cost of river control and may make feasible a higher quality of navigation development than otherwise would be justified. The power-development program would also contribute measurably to the possibilities of flood control.

In addition, within an area of reasonable discretion, the proper administration of these power resources may naturally result in reduction of unjustified rates on the part of private utilities, and may encourage wider and more varied use of electric power.

Various Types of Power Policy

Within the range of administrative discretion any one of several types of power policy might be pursued. The TVA Act requires that preference shall be given to states, cities, towns and coöperative organizations. At one extreme the policy might be adopted that within the proper limits of the statute the private power companies might be looked upon as the normal agencies for distributing power, and that, while furnishing power to any municipalities which could explicitly demand it, the TVA in the main should plan to sell its power wholesale to the private utilities and leave the distribution to them. That is the solution the private utilities would prefer. In its manner of selling public power to private utilities, an administration inclined to do so might almost contribute to the exploitation of the region by utility companies at public expense.

The other extreme attitude might be stated as follows. The private utilities through gross abuses have lost all claim to consideration; partly in retaliation for past abuses, partly to destroy their power to do wrong in the future, the powerful position of the TVA should be used to dismember the large private utilities in its region, whereupon the fragments could be acquired at bargain prices by public organizations. According to that extreme attitude, the process is essentially a war of social revolution and must result in the subjugation and surrender of one party. All is fair in war, and in that process damage to private investment, and even great loss to the public, through disruption of efficient systems and a period of inadequate service, are but incidents, like the blowing up of buildings in the path of a military charge. Incidental to this process is the incitement of class hatred and development of dramatic political issues on which a few men may ride to public prominence. The TVA is in a very powerful strategic position, and it is within the limits of possibilities that such a program of destructive warfare on the utilities could be carried to successful conclusion, but at great social and economic cost.

Between these extremes there are many alternative positions which may be taken. The TVA has no formally adopted power policy except as stated in the law. Any further statement of its policy, therefore, would have to be derived by inference from its acts and attitude. At the present time I do not wish to draw any inferences. I will, however, illustrate what might be one of the many intermediate positions it would be possible to take.

The assumption may be made that the supplying of power to the public, involving as it does the exercise of governmental functions, such as the monopoly of franchises and the right of eminent domain, is in reality public business. Whether the public shall do that business directly, through owning and operating its utilities, or shall give franchises for that purpose to private organizations, is for the public to decide. There is nothing radical or revolutionary in public ownership and operation of public utilities. The ends to be achieved should be the widest possible use of electricity at the lowest feasible rates and with a minimum of unwholesome social influences.

In the determination of these matters there are certain elements of public policy, of economy and of fair play that will be observed in any wholesome program. A sovereign government should not act in a spirit of retaliation, of getting even for past abuses. Wrong-doing should be stopped, abuses corrected; inflated capitalization and other improper charges should be eliminated; but, in so far as honest and necessary investments in power utilities are honestly administered in the public service, private power utilities should be looked upon as honorable undertakings and investments in them should be given the same consideration as any other properly made investment. Compared with England, for instance, where public ownership of electrical utilities has dominated the field, the American electric-power industry has achieved a much higher de-

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gree of standardization, integration and economy of operation. That fact also should be recognized. In any transition from private to public ownership, those great economies should be retained. In the acquisition of private utility systems by the public, the areas of acquisition should be such as not to dismember well organized technical and administrative units or to leave some areas badly served. Also in the transition from private to public ownership existing systems should be taken over at fair appraisals, and should not be duplicated, except as a last resort when no reasonable settlement with private utilities can be reached. The sovereign government should not give up any of its powers of compulsion, but should use them only as a last resort to enforce fair play and reasonableness as determined by disinterested appraisal, and not for retaliation or subjugation.

President Roosevelt has made two suggestions which would seem to contribute toward the establishment of a suitable power policy. One of these is for the organization of a power-transmission pool which would make TVA power equally available to public and private distributors over both public and private transmission lines. His other proposal is for the definition of a national power policy through act of Congress to be administered by some national body, such as the Federal Power Commission. This would tend to remove power politics from the field of local controversy.

Such is a brief outline of one of many alternatives to an extreme position on the power issue. I believe that any power policy should include the provision that power which can be economically generated at the multipurpose TVA dams should be used before private companies install duplicating and competing power-generating units. It would be a fundamental economic loss for TVA power to lie idle while large expenditures were being made for private duplicating plants.

In endeavoring to get the full benefit of unified river control, there are other values that should not be overlooked. Around the TVA reservoirs there will be several thousand miles of lake shore, much of it very beautiful. Taken together, these Tennessee River pools will constitute one of the largest inland bodies of water in America.

The possibilities of fish culture in these waters are great, both for commercial fishing and for sport. Already water fowl have discovered these lakes, and in time they may be as good areas for the sportsman as the famous Reelfoot Lake in western Tennessee.

The creation of the more southerly of these reservoirs increases the problem of malaria control. In mastering that problem the ideal should be not simply to reduce malaria to its former frequency of occurrence, but if possible completely to eliminate it. In purchasing land for the reservoirs it frequently is cheaper to buy the land adjacent to the lakes than to provide new roadways on the steep hillsides. The administration of this marginal land for forestry purposes may also become a significant incident in the program for unified river control.

These relatively minor values of unified control are not adequately provided for in the TVA Act. The next four years might well see them brought to a normal development in right proportion to the whole.

I omit from this article an extended discussion of the question of fertilizer, which was discussed at some length in the Washington Notes in The New Republic of December 2, 1936.

A widespread program for the readjustment of agriculture has been put into effect under TVA guidance. This is being carried out through subsidies by the TVA to federal or federally supported agencies, especially to the land-grant colleges and to the organizations of county agricultural agents. The chief aims of this program are to reduce soil erosion through a transition from plow crops to grass crops and by terracing rolling land now greatly subject to erosion, to improve the use of fertilizers and to promote the readjustment of agricultural practice. Many farmers have coöperated with this program, either individually or through local associations, such as terracing clubs. Several thousand individual farmers have been furnished with a certain amount of TVA fertilizer on condition that they will administer their farms under direction and will make reports of the results. Either directly or through subsidies to land-grant colleges, the TVA is also promoting a study of agricultural industries.

In the field of forestry an educational program is under way to combat the general tendency to set forest fires, to help farmers make the best use of their wood lots, and to add elements of forestry education to the CCC program in the TVA region. A research program is under way to develop tree crops, and a research and demonstration project is going on in community forest management. By developing forest types which will shortly produce foods, forests may more quickly have economic value. Perhaps the most productive part of the forestry program is the educational work to overcome the widespread habit of setting forest fires. About half the TVA area is in forest. If forest fires can be stopped, the accumulation of leaf mold would be perhaps the greatest check to rapid flow of water after heavy storms. The agricultural and forestry program as a whole could be clarified and strengthened by legislative amendments.

Social and Economic Planning

Limited studies in social and economic planning are being made by the TVA. An extensive study of recreational resources has been completed; a study of transportation that will best promote the needs of the region is under way. Extensive studies have been made of the probable growth of use of electric power. Extensive studies have been made of geological resources and of their probable use.

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Much of the work of social and economic value in the TVA has been the result of the manner in which the day's work was done, rather than any specific social program. In the construction of dams, an advanced labor policy has been in force. Modern standards of housing have been maintained. Vocational training for employees to make them better workers has contributed directly to economy of construction. The necessity for moving landowners from the flooded areas of the reservoirs has resulted in a resettlement program which includes a study of the needs and resources of individual farmers and coöperation with them in their favorable relocation. Concentration of workmen on and about construction jobs has made necessary a health program of inspection and education in the surrounding region, so that a higher level of hygienic conditions might be maintained. The tendency of real-estate promoters and speculators to exploit the building of public works has been quite completely checked through coöperation with the local real-estate bodies and with state and local planning boards.

In the fertilizer and agricultural program a vast amount of education has been carried on with farmers to help them to realize the significance of desirable agricultural practices. In the power program, also, a large amount of publicity and educational work has been done in acquainting individuals and communities with the possibility of wider use of electric power. There has been much informal cooperation with state and local planning boards. On the whole, however, these activities have been incidental to the regular work of the TVA.

The fact is that the TVA Act is not a charter for any general program of social and economic planning, though the region is peculiarly in need of such an approach to its problems. It is scarcely necessary to say that social and economic planning does not imply any academic blue-printing of the life of a region, but rather the extension of those well established, orderly processes of development which are the very essence of civilization.

Even the unified control of the Tennessee River system, which is implicit in the TVA Act, would profit by further legislative definition and amplification. In the matter of soil erosion, this region is one of the most seriously affected of all America, and a demonstration of orderly methods in association with readjusted agriculture, forestry and industry would greatly help in determining the conditions under which it may be overcome. The region has a marked excess of agricultural population and a marked deficiency of industrial development for supplying its own needs, along with great undeveloped natural resources.

An orderly effort to relate these factors to each other in the well balanced development of the region is in some respects beyond the scope of private industry. To supplement the normal undertakings of private industry with conscious planning in the public interest in the TVA region would be likely to throw interesting and valuable light upon the possibilities of orderly regional growth. Such a purpose is only dimly reflected in the TVA Act, and legislative amplification to make that purpose clear would be a very great help. A few illustrations may be given of what would be desirable.

What Planning Could Do

Especially in the rough hill land there is a great surplus of agricultural population. Either that population must continue to live on an extremely inadequate economic basis, or the surplus workers must move to Northern industrial centers—or else local industry must develop, which directly or indirectly will increase the purchasing power and consuming capacity. If this is looked upon merely as a region of cheap labor, to which Northern industries may escape from higher to lower labor standards and from higher to lower wages, there might be, not an increase of national prosperity, but only a transference from one region to another, as has been the case to some extent in the textile industry. Industrial development within the TVA region should mean not the impoverishment of other regions, but rather a total increase in our national producing and consuming capacity.

There are great mineral and other natural resources in the TVA region. Some of these have been discovered and located by TVA geologists. It would be in accord with the public interest if industry should reap the reward of superior management in the development of these resources, but it should not be rewarded for acquiring a monopoly of the resources themselves. It is my personal view that irreplaceable deposits of natural resources should belong to the public and that their development by private industry should be under such conditions of public control as would ensure against wasteful exploitation and against charges based upon monopoly of ownership. I see no immediate prospects of such a program's being incorporated in the public policy.

About half the TVA area is forest land. Much of this has been cut over, and most of it is burned over each year. The public welfare requires that this forest area be administered in such a manner as to result in the greatest possible production of forest products, the best protection from soil erosion, the most effective retardation of flood-water flow, the largest possibilities for wholesome, stable and well paid employment, often associated with agriculture, and the largest of recreational facilities, fishing and hunting. While the government is spending millions of dollars to prevent soil erosion, the small-scale mountain farmers of this region, hard-pressed for sources of livelihood, are clearing steep mountain sides for three or four corn crops before the soil is washed away and the land destroyed. It is therefore a question as to whether the expensive repair work of the government is keeping pace with this destruction going on in the same region at the

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same time. It is doubtful whether private industry alone can handle this problem of forest conservation. It has failed quite completely to do so in the past, in this region. At present the TVA law does not provide a legislative basis for meeting this problem.

These issues are not separate and distinct dilemmas, each to be handled by itself. They are parts of a great cultural and economic complex. One might wish that the TVA, as an experiment in regional government, in coöperation with local and state governments and with private industry, could endeavor to work out the interrelation of these various problems, and by a process of research, coöperation, coördination and encouragement, stimulate an enduring and prosperous economy in a region that has great natural resources and a fine native population. Industry should be related to agriculture. Forestry, industry and agriculture cannot well be separated. The greatest check to soil erosion would be an increase of industrial opportunity which would reduce the pressure upon the land and would result in taking some marketable land out of cultivation. The low educational level of some regions, with all of the bad social consequences which follow, is largely a result of inadequate economic opportunity. In some areas vigorous activity is checked by the prevalence of malaria.

Development of industries is greatly hampered by freight discriminations, which may be partly overcome by water transportation. The remarkable recreational resources of the region, with the Smoky Mountains, the large lakes formed by TVA dams and the many beautiful waterfalls, can be best developed with regional zoning, which will protect scenic highways from abuse, and also by developing facilities for travelers. Abundance of cheap electric power might be consumed by a few great chemical industries, or by efficient and economical distribution it may be made to reach the smallest hamlet, to make life more tolerable on the farm, and to make possible decentralized industry.

I have read that, if present tendencies continue, within twenty-five years half the population of America will have been born within the relatively small area south of the Mason-Dixon Line. Whether that population shall be vigorous, healthy, well educated and economically prosperous, or whether economic poverty and lack of educational opportunities shall drive millions of these people to our Northern cities, or whether they shall be employed on a low economic level by industries that have escaped from Northern regions of good labor conditions—these things will depend largely upon the direction of development of this region within the next decade or two. This is a national issue, and the Congress, in stabilizing and enlarging the functions of the Tennessee Valley Authority, would be contributing to the national interest.

ARTHUR E. MORGAN.

England after the Crisis

TIRED and relaxed after a hectic week of crisis, this island where monarchy still lingers is beginning to reflect. Its public reactions are simple, and on the whole, complacent. The machine of government functioned with perfect steadiness. Mr. Baldwin, commonly an inert and dilatory driver, acted with decision. The unanimity of Parliament was only underlined by the fact that seven members out of six hundred and fifteen voted for a republican resolution. The Empire stood solid, and the new King will be crowned on the date already allotted to his brother. It ranks on the surface among the most efficient and cold-blooded performances of a rather insensitive governing class that understands to a nicety the technique of managing a docile people. Appearances were saved, and in public all the chief actors in this sour comedy exchanged compliments. Nothing is lacking, not even the selected extracts from the world's press that confirm this island in its self-esteem.

Under the surface the movement of opinion is troubled and confused. There were a few days of genuine alarm, which the Stock Exchange reflected. There was a beginning, not of rioting but of demonstrations in the streets, which King Edward discouraged by remaining in his retreat near Windsor. Sentiment among the working class in London, though not in the North, was warmly on his side, " 'E's wound 'isself round our 'earts, 'e 'as," as a bus-conductor put it, with the full assent of his passengers.

At one moment, on Friday, the day after the secret burst, there was the possibility of one of the ugliest conflicts in English history. Mr. Churchill was manifestly rallying a party of the King's Men. If King Edward had rejected Mr. Baldwin's advice, the latter would have resigned. But the Labor Party would have refused office in these conditions. In that event it would have been perfectly constitutional for the King to call on Mr. Churchill, who might have rallied perhaps a hundred members, and dissolved Parliament. Mr. Lloyd George, stranded in the West Indies, was preparing to hurry home, and one foresaw a general election in which sentimental and constitutional issues would have crossed a division of opinion on wholly different lines.

A party of youth and action, advocating an even stiffer dose of rearmament, a stronger foreign policy and, as a sop to gentler feelings, effective help for the depressed areas, would have challenged the

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Elder Statesmen. The Labor Party, reduced once more to saying "Yes, Sir" to Mr. Baldwin, as it did over Ethiopia and Spain, would have receded even farther into the shadow. One saw the coming at last of the expected fascist movement, in a wholly original shirt of Anglo-Saxon cut, with a spirited young King as its royal Führer. Two of the popular London morning newspapers were in this camp. With skillful publicity, if King Edward had been willing, under such masters of rhetoric and intrigue as Mr. Churchill and Mr. Lloyd George, who knows what the outcome might have been? Not, I think, in any circumstances an electoral victory for this new brand of royalist fascism, but none the less a rift in English society and English politics that might have brought this island to the verge of the gravest dangers. The monarchy could not have survived the shock of such an election, however it had ended. The Labor Party, even if it had hesitated at the opening of the crisis, would have been driven to a republican position. The fascism that is latent and half-conscious today would have found its feet. Fortunately the King, who had long disliked his uncongenial job, rejected the temptation to fight.

It was, doubtless, because they saw this danger before them, that Englishmen in the mass repressed their curiosity about aspects of this crisis that may have lurked beneath the surface. Was there a clash of temperament and outlook between this reckless, unconventional young King and the staid Elder Statesmen? Did they resent the implied and deserved rebuke to their inertia in his outspoken promise of action, when he visited the unemployed in South Wales? Did they chafe at the gallant indiscretion of his pilgrimage to the wreckage of Karl Marx House during his incognito visit to Vienna? Gossip embroidered these themes, but there were other tales decidedly less creditable to the King. Perhaps the fairest summary of the position ends with this question: If Mr. Baldwin had thought this young man a suitable monarch, would he not have favored a morganatic marriage?

For this there is, to be sure, no native precedent, but how often do Englishmen boast their genius for compromise, and the elasticity of their Constitution? The dominions (meaning their governments) were against it. It was Mr. Baldwin who framed the question. They knew the answer he expected, and they gave it. But if he had urged the wisdom of compromise, if he had reminded them that the Constitution adapts itself to the times, if he had invited their assent to this easy way out, is it so certain that they would have refused? There is, then, some ground for the view that the Young Men held, that this smooth, commonplace Premier did in fact "depose the King." He could not have done it without the support of the High Anglican Church, standing stiffly on its sacerdotal view of marriage. But equally, it is unlikely that he would have done it if in other respects the late King had conformed to the received conservative ideal of opinion and behavior.

Any forecast of the future must necessarily be subjective. Your correspondent has listened this week with mounting interest to things said in buses and shops, in a lonely village as well as in London. Two divisions of opinion were apparent—according to class, and according to age. The elder middle class was for Mr. Baldwin. It was staggering to hear elderly middle-class women, pillars of the village church, declare for the solution of a tolerated mistress. In the common room of an Oxford College, the "dons" were divided by a strict age line. But on one point everyone agreed: the monarchy had been discredited. "A year ago," as a platelayer on the railway put it, " 'e was God Almighty, and now 'e's dragged the throne in the mud." An effort will be made, of course, with all the resources of official propaganda, backed by commercial interests, to popularize the new King. Probably it will fail. The reflection that the kingly job can be fulfilled satisfactorily only by a dull and negative personality lies too near the surface to escape the simplest man's perception. One heard much also that is unprintable, which reflected a general opinion that this family is physically effete. An old charwoman in the London bus had heard certain things from "an 'orspital nurse." The myth is broken beyond repair.

About that myth one learned much at the time of the death of George V. Marxists allow too little for psychology. It was driven home to me, going about with ears open, that "the father of his people" is a phrase with a literal meaning, that becomes intelligible only if one has read Freud. Royalism is an ancestor cult. That bearded Majesty, with the heavy but kindly voice, who broadcast from the skies into every English home at Christmas, satisfied the yearning for a sublime Father. "At school," said a London workingman, "we were taught about two things, God and the King. Well, as I got older, I never saw much sign of God, but the King was really there." I reflected sadly—for I am a rationalist born in the nineteenth century—that if humanity must have a Father, it will find one. If there is no hereditary king to carry on the ancestor cult, it will choose a führer. But this myth, as I read events, has been shattered. The Father could not be this pathetically thwarted figure that drew happiness from Baltimore. As little can it be the substituted younger brother. The myth evaporates when titles are investigated.

In its characteristically undramatic way, even the Labor Party has recognized the new situation. It effaced itself with remarkable modesty during the crisis, but at the climax it said one thing, briefly but very plainly, through Mr. Attlee. It called for greater simplicity, and less of the fulsome adulation of the past. It is, of course, well aware that when the feudal system crumbled, the owning class used the trappings of the emasculated monarchy to confirm its own ascendancy. Why, then, it asks, should not Labor in its turn use the monarchy to keep the army loyal and the owning class submissive, when

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it is strong enough to alter the class structure? To this there are two answers. The primary use of monarchy is that by its decorative function and its faint aura of sanctity it renders inequality tolerable. Can these things be used to establish equality?

Royalty, moreover, survives in this modern world, thanks only to a marvelous mechanism wholly controlled by the owning class. The discipline of the English press, that for months kept an unbroken silence till a blundering Bishop broke it, was the most startling phenomenon of this crisis. No totalitarian State has a technique of censorship so subtle as this. It will not be at Labor's disposal when, if ever, its hour strikes. Moreover, by tolerating this myth, Labor consents to the enslavement of the minds of its own simpler supporters. In this excuse for its royalism, the Party was rationalizing its own weakness. That it begins to see the risk was evident from the keynote struck in the crucial debate. The main result of this crisis is, then, that royalty can survive only as a convenience, stripped of its myth and of its romantic appeal. That means inevitably that some of the cement that held the English social structure together has rotted. The outer Left is now avowing its republicanism. The extremer Right, though it has suffered a heavy defeat, will still grope toward a fascist pattern. But its führer can be neither the too enterprising Mr. Churchill, nor "a King over the water."

London. H. N. BRAILSFORD.

The Traffic Catastrophe

EVERYTHING nowadays is either a crisis or a catastrophe. Since I am a little tired of crises, perhaps we could discuss traffic congestion under the heading of catastrophe.

The word is not so much of an exaggeration as one might suppose. Before the depression, overcrowding on urban streets was rapidly approaching the intolerable, and today, with the number of cars in use again mounting, the question of finding room for them is once more growing acute. If I discuss what is happening in New York City, I do so for three reasons: first, because nearly every problem of the metropolis is duplicated elsewhere; second, because whatever is done here to help matters is likely to be copied in other communities, and third, because I live in New York, have first-hand contact with these conditions, and shall probably burst if I don't get a chance to report on them.

New York's municipal authorities are belatedly in a state of grave alarm about the movement of traffic. Competent students of the subject report that with another five-percent increase, the breaking point will be reached, at least as regards cross-town traffic in the middle of the city, between Fourteenth and Fifty-ninth Streets. Such an increase is expected within the next few months. It is already true in regard to many streets that one can make better time on foot than in a car. The Fire Department is deeply concerned about the possibility of a bad conflagration resulting, at least in part, from inability of apparatus to get through the crowded streets. The estimate is made that time lost by vehicles because of congestion is costing from $1,000,000 to $1,500,000 a day. Many stores, restaurants, theatres and other business institutions in the congested area are losing money because of it.

The situation will have become unendurable long before the two new midtown vehicular tunnels, to New Jersey and Brooklyn, are open and are pouring thousands of vehicles daily into mid-town; what it will be thereafter, and especially when the World's Fair begins in 1939, staggers the imagination. Already there is talk of a cross-town vehicular tunnel connecting the two new tubes, and possibly of additional tunnels or elevated highways running from river to river in the area of greatest congestion. It is unlikely, however, that anything of this sort will be done soon enough, or on a large enough scale, to meet the situation; and even with three or four such high-speed roadways, the congestion on all other streets will remain very much as it is now.

It is obvious that the situation would be ameliorated, though not wholly solved, by off-the-street parking. When cars are stationary on both sides of a four-lane street, the street's capacity to move vehicles is of course cut in two. Double parking cuts the use of the highway 75 percent.

For several years the society of traffic engineers, at its annual meetings, has been coming closer to a bold recommendation on this subject. That recommendation is that every new business building in a congested area should be required to provide off-street parking space for the entire number of motor vehicles that may reasonably be expected to visit it simultaneously. It is obvious, however, that we shall be many years in reaching this counsel of perfection and that even when it is attained, it will not solve the problem for existing buildings, many of which could not be altered to meet this specification. What to do in the meantime?

New York has lagged behind the entire country in providing off-the-street parking in the congested area. For various reasons, some of them far from creditable to city officials, open-air parking lots have been rigidly limited in number and this in turn has resulted in high fees—too high for many automobile owners. There is some surplus space available in garages, but these are unpopular with the public for several good reasons: with most of them, parking fees are high, entrance and exit are difficult,

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locations are inconvenient, their rooms are dark and dirty and attendants are almost uniformly discourteous and careless. Ten years later than they should have done so, the city authorities are now beginning to discuss creating additional parking facilities on vacant lots and in unused buildings. Among the devices at which they are looking is the "ferris-wheel" parking machine through whose use eight or ten cars can be parked in a space not much larger than one of them would occupy resting on the ground.

Trucks and other commercial vehicles, engaged in loading operations, are responsible for a great part of New York's congestion. It is they that cause most of the double parking and slow down traffic by backing into the curb, with the front of the truck extending nearly halfway across the street. To an innocent bystander it is hard to see why the city authorities make almost no attack on this aspect of the situation. A large part of the loading work could just as easily be done at night, or in the early morning, and only habit and inertia prevent this. If the authorities were to issue two types of truck licenses, one of them good only at night and costing much less than the other, or were otherwise to discourage deliveries during the business day, they could clear up much congestion in a short time.

Chicago has solved the traffic snarl in the heart of the city by entirely forbidding curb parking in the Loop district. Although department-store owners in this area protested violently when the plan was proposed, I am informed that after several years' trial they are highly pleased with the result. The owners of New York's stores, however, are still the victims of traditionalism. Although careful studies indicate that less than five percent of their customers come in private automobiles, and although congestion in the streets is certainly doing them harm, they are fighting vigorously against nearly all proposals to curtail parking.

New York has recently experimented, on a few streets, with parking limited to one side only, permitting it on one side of the street until noon and the other thereafter. The general opinion seems to be that this plan is a failure, and certainly the regulation is widely disobeyed. In Paris, and some other European cities, parking is permitted on one side of the street or the other on alternate days: on even numbered days of the month, you may park in front of houses with even numbers. This plan is reported to work well.

It is common observation that cruising taxicabs constitute an extremely serious contribution to the overcrowding of New York's streets. The estimate was made some time ago that there are twice as many cabs as the traffic requires. Drivers get miserably low wages and cab users suffer, with everyone else, from the traffic blockade. For this situation the automobile manufacturers are primarily to blame: they produce an unreasonably large number of taxis and dump them into New York streets on almost any terms. It has often been suggested that New York should license only a sensible number of cabs, and follow London's example by requiring these to wait at fixed points for passengers instead of roaming the streets.

Twenty-six American cities have partially solved the problem of the congested areas by installing parking meters, and the number of communities where these devices are used is rapidly increasing. In these cities, spaces twenty feet in length are marked off with painted lines, with a parking meter on the sidewalk opposite each of them. When a car enters one of these spaces for parking, the driver puts a nickel in the slot and a green flag is raised, automatically, and remains visible for a stipulated length of time which may be anything from fifteen minutes to two hours or more, depending upon conditions in the immediate area. At the end of that time, the green flag disappears and thereafter the owner of the vehicle is subject to arrest for illegal parking. It may or may not be necessary to vacate the space at the expiration of the time paid for; but it is necessary to return to the car and put in another nickel or run the risk of arrest. The great advantage of this device is that it does away with the "parking hog"—the man who drives downtown early in the morning and leaves his car all day. In city after city—many of them about as congested as New York—the authorities report that the use of parking meters has abolished double parking, has made it possible to find vacant space in every block at practically any hour, and, by making more room, has speeded up traffic to a notable degree. The parking meters also produce an astonishingly large amount of revenue—so much of it that the first few months' operations pay the cost of installation and thereafter the city enjoys a continuous and substantial revenue.

All the palliatives enumerated in this article, if applied simultaneously and vigorously, would bring some degree of improvement; but they are not of course the final answer to the question. That final answer is to be found in city, regional and national planning. It is not at all unlikely that New York is larger than—perhaps twice as large as—it ought to be, unless it were to be entirely replanned, on an intelligent basis. It is possible that the most hopeful development for metropolitan traffic would be the St. Lawrence Canal project, which would divert a vast amount of business that now goes through New York, and that second to this would be consistent development of the entire port so that freight arriving from midwestern points would be loaded on ships along the Jersey shore and not trucked through Manhattan streets as so much of it now is. Much other decentralization is possible and desirable. Judging, however, from the attitude of the Chamber of Commerce and similar bodies, we are a generation away from having enough collective brains to desire a city of a reasonable size, and in the meantime, we shall go on with palliatives never sufficiently sweeping, or applied in time, to give real relief to urban life.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

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Washington Notes

What Happened at Buenos Aires—F.D.R. Steals Some Thunder and Starts Some Fights—The League Dispute a False Front

THE REAL story of the Buenos Aires peace conference, according to experts here, is considerably different from that reported in the daily press. The fight over the League of Nations, which received nearly as much space as Mr. Roosevelt's visit, seems to have been pure sham. The United States did not attempt to make the Latin American countries violate their pledges under the League Covenant. Mr. Hull's original draft proposal contained a clause exempting signatory nations from all obligations in conflict with prior treaties. This clause was put in specifically to protect League members.

What, then, was the League fight about? Experts here say it arose partly from the overweening vanity of the Argentine Foreign Minister, Dr. Saavedra Lamas, and partly from South American power politics. Dr. Saavedra Lamas' self-admiration has been mentioned before in these Notes. It is one of the marvels of the world, like the Taj Mahal by moonlight. He recently received the Nobel prize for settling the Chaco war, and expected to shine at the peace conference in glory. Mr. Roosevelt's last-minute decision to visit Argentina seems to have come as a nasty shock. From being Number One Great Man at the conference, he found himself abruptly reduced to carrying a spear in the ranks. This was the cause, according to the experts, for his four days of steady tantrums, and his dark hints of refusing to sign any treaty whatever.

From Argentina's point of view, however, Mr. Roosevelt's worst offense was in landing at Rio de Janeiro on his way south. This was the skillful work of Mr. Oswaldo Aranha, Brazilian ambassador to the United States, candidate for the presidency of Brazil and a great favorite in Washington. It meant that for two long days, on the very eve of the peace conference, world attention was diverted away from Buenos Aires to Brazil. Mr. Roosevelt gave the Brazilian President, Dr. Vargas, a great *embrazo,* calling him a fellow New Dealer—a most curious remark, considering that Dr. Vargas heads one of the neatest fascist tyrannies now extant. By the time Mr. Roosevelt reached Buenos Aires, the Brazilians were speaking of him as their own personal property.

It happens that Brazil is not a member of the League, while Argentina is. It became understood at Buenos Aires that if Mr. Hull's draft proposal was adopted as it stood, without mentioning the League by name, Brazil would have somehow proved itself top dog in South America. Conversely, if the League was mentioned, Argentina would be top dog. On such an issue, Dr. Saavedra Lamas and the whole Argentine nation were prepared to fight indefinitely, like Grant before Richmond. Ultimately Argentina won. But the point to be noted is that the practical difference between the two formulas—"obligations under prior treaties" and "obligations under the League"—is nil.

However, there is more in the episode than that. It is fair to ask why, if Mr. Hull really meant his clause concerning prior treaties, or if the Latin American countries really meant theirs concerning the League, the peace conference was held at all. Under the League, member nations are bound to submit all disputes to its jurisdiction, and to follow the procedure laid down in its Covenant. In the League scheme of things, an independent and rival organization is impossible. Experts here, however, say that the United States and the Latin American nations met at Buenos Aires with the precedent of the Chaco war negotiations clearly in their minds. In those negotiations, the A.B.C. powers, together with the United States, Peru and Uruguay, calmly told the League to go peddle its papers. Dr. Saavedra Lamas, indeed, was chiefly responsible for having the League's investigating commission—headed by the present Spanish Foreign Minister, Mr. Alvarez del Vayo—run off the continent. The undisguised purpose of the conference at Buenos Aires was to erect diplomatic machinery by which American disputes could be settled in America—necessarily without intervention by the League. Despite the formal reservations of the Latin countries, and the hullabaloo raised by Dr. Saavedra Lamas, the fact that the American nations now possess an elaborate peace structure of their own means that the League's writ will soon cease to run on this hemisphere.

After the League, the incident to receive most attention in press dispatches was the refusal of Argentina and other nations to agree to Mr. Hull's proposed embargo understanding. This provided for an embargo of arms, ammunition and implements of war. What most dispatches omitted to say was that not one of the twenty Latin American nations manufactures munitions, or has the industrial equipment to do so. Not one of them could conceivably export munitions, except perhaps from the stores of its standing army, even if it wanted to. It was like asking the United States not to export specimens of Mrs. Harkness' giant panda. We don't keep any.

The reluctance of the Latin American nations to sign Mr. Hull's treaty was caused solely by the Chaco. Argentina and Uruguay serve as transshipment points for European and United States munitions destined for Paraguay; Chile and Peru are transshipment points for Bolivia. Happily the Chaco war now seems ended, but these four neighboring countries were extremely wary about signing anything that might prevent them from helping their belligerent little friends. On the other hand, all the Latin American nations cheerfully agreed to adopt a common embargo policy, and to consult together on possible measures to be taken through domestic legislation in case of a war in Europe or the Orient.

What seems to me the most interesting happening at Buenos Aires was scarcely mentioned by the press. In the private conversations that took place over the embargo agreement, Dr. Saavedra Lamas is reported to have asked pointedly whether the United States proposed to embargo wartime shipments of wheat and meat products. The wheat farmers and cattle ranchers of Argentina, he said, were wholly unwilling to forgo wartime profits, particularly if their competitors in the United States did not intend to. According to the story reaching Washington, the United States delegation sat mute. Yet there cannot be the slightest doubt that food ships will be torpedoed in the next European war, just as they were in the last one. The Roosevelt administration's unwillingness to provide for embargoes

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of wheat and meat products—apparently because of its fear of farm opposition—is perhaps the greatest weakness in our preparations for neutrality.

Experts here also feel that the press unduly minimized Mr. Hull's economic program. Here again Argentina was held up as the great obstacle. It was pointed out that Argentina maintains a complex system of exchange controls, and thus represents the antithesis of Mr. Hull's economic libertarianism. The experts, however, say that Argentina's prosperity of the last two years has made its exchange restrictions superfluous, and they suspect that it is continuing them chiefly as a bargaining point with the United States. Argentina is resolved to obtain the removal of the quarantine that we now place on its beef, which the Argentine cattle barons regard as an egregious slander on the quality of their herds. If we will lift our quarantine, the experts predict that Argentina will gladly abolish its currency controls. Since, during his stay in Buenos Aires, Mr. Roosevelt publicly promised President Justo that the quarantine would be removed, the prospects for a reciprocity agreement between the United States and Argentina, instead of being gloomy, are distinctly bright.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Get-Rich-Quick Invention—New Rockefeller Blood—Nice Work if You Can Get It

NEVER has a sweeter invention for making money easily and quickly been invented than the investment trust. As one looks back now one is filled with a sense of sadness that the boys did not get on to it a little earlier in the twenties. They never really fully recognized its potentialities until too near the reign of the gentle Coolidge and then it was too late. However, a better day is dawning. The mystic sluices whence flows money have been opened. The golden flood rises again and men—men on the make—are gathered again upon the banks. If we do not let some of those foolish meddlers in Washington stop the rich racket, there is still plenty of time for the intelligent American to do some big things with the investment trust.

Consider the fine work of Mr. Louis H. Seagrave and, more recently, of Mr. David M. Milton. Mr. Milton is part of the third Rockefeller generation. Somehow we had the notion that the Rockefeller energy had passed out of the money-making stage, particularly with the passing of Percy Rockefeller; that with John D. Jr. this elemental force had entered upon the money-distribution stage. But now comes a third generation, and I am told that, though the youngsters do not really need the money, they have begun—some of them at least—to exhibit evidences of the magnificent talent which flowered so gloriously in the old saint now creeping toward his centennial at Ormond Beach. Mr. David Milton has married into the family, bringing with him a fresh infusion of the insatiable hunger which has made the clan great.

But to begin at the beginning. Some years ago Mr. Louis H. Seagrave, who started out with little or nothing, came into control of the American Founders' Corporation. According to the SEC investigation being made by young David Schenker, Mr. Seagrave got possession of a third interest in 12,500 shares of no-par common stock of the American Founders. How much money he invested I do not know. But in 1930 these 12,500 shares were worth $333,000.

Mind you, Mr. Seagrave and associates had 12,500 shares. That was only a small fraction of the stock of the American Founders. This was a holding company, masquerading as an investment trust. It owned numerous other large investment trusts and dominated several utility holding companies which had got hold of several important utility systems, including the billion-dollar Standard Gas and Electric Corporation.

It was now necessary for Mr. Seagrave and his group to nail down their control of this vast network of holdings. So they organized another holding company, the United Founders' Corporation, which got control of the American.

United Founders issued 1,000,000 shares of Class A. These 1,000,000 shares were issued to Seagrave and two companions in return for their 12,500 shares of common stock of American Founders. Then, in addition, 5,000,000 shares of common were authorized. But only 2,400,000 were issued. These were issued at $10.50 a share.

At this rate the 1,000,000 Class A shares cost $330,000, paid for in American Founders' stock. The 2,400,000 common shares cost $25,200,000. But the former—Class A shares—were always to have one-third voting power; the latter two-thirds.

Now watch the money grow. The 2,400,000 shares were issued to Seagrave, his wife, his associates and directors of the American Founders and some other friendly interests. How they paid the $10.50 a share I do not know. But the general object of United Founders was to get control of American Founders. So it is probable much of this was paid for with American Founders stock.

But there remained 2,600,000 shares of common not issued. The promoters then began selling this to the public. In a month they sold 500,000 shares of this to the public at $25 a share, or 221 percent more than they paid for their common shares. A few months later they sold a million more shares of United common at $35 a share. Then a little later another million shares were issued to the American Founders at about $52.50 a share.

Remember now that the promoters had a million shares of Class A which held one-third voting control no matter how much common was sold and this had cost them $330,000. Remember also they had 2,400,000 shares of common for which they paid $10.50, or $25,200,000, and that now this stock was worth, at the price they were selling shares, $126,000,000. The boys had an unrealized profit of over a hundred million dollars. How much of it they actually realized by selling their shares I do not know.

But you can see, as I have frequently tried to illustrate, what a fool a man is to waste his days and wear himself out at useful work when money is to be made so easily and simply. And it is such pleasant work. In fact it was so easy they decided to put out another 10,000,000 shares. They sold a million of these in June, 1929, at 54 and on September 16 they sold another million for $60 a share. By this time those original 2,400,000 shares were worth $144,000,000—original cost, $25,200,000. But alas, only a few weeks away yawned October 23 and the beginning of

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doom. The volcano was rumbling but the wizards heard it not. By March, 1933, these shares for which some had paid $60 were worth $1.06. The proud abundance of Messrs. Seagrave *et al.* had shrunk from $144,000,000 to $2,544,000; still too much by far.

And while these high jinks were going on I was writing about investment trusts in The New Republic. And important persons in United Founders were writing me patronizingly, instructing me and trying, patiently and kindly, to point out to me pharisaically how the United Founders was not as other trusts. This is merely a single chapter of this comedy. The rest we must leave for next week.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

Intimate Journalism

Paul Gauguin's Intimate Journals, translated by Van Wyck Brooks. Preface by Emil Gauguin. New York: Crown Publishers. 254 pages. $2.75.

THERE is a point that I have sometimes thought a fine irony about art and art criticism. The paintings of Rubens, Raphael, Titian or Mantegna, for example, rest there in their frames, serene, studied, certain; they are very much more single, distinguished and clear than most of the theories about them produced by the professors of esthetics, critics or lecturers. Perhaps this is because these paintings have in them some finality or ultimate completion: the lecturer hurls himself against them as if he dealt with the sun, the permanence of forms in nature or the lasting patterns of man's thought and feeling. And so the security and character within such paintings rather makes a joke of the uncertainty and diversity of the esthetic exegeses thrust upon us. With more modern paintings the case is often very different.

The more specialized and theorized, the more suggestive, the less defined, the painting may be, the more fiercely focused is likely to be the critical explanation. Perhaps there is something the painting allows, some invitation to the bounce, that leads the critic or professor to a vehemence of himself; he expresses himself in terms of the painting, and about himself he is clear, hot or ultimate. I doubt if it is too much to say that a painter whose work meant nothing at all—granting that to be possible—would, if well promoted by the dealers, draw of all his modern kind the securest criticism and be accredited with the most defiant thesis.

Nobody could say that Gauguin is the vaguest of painters. But he did enjoy sufficient fresh truculence, startling self-pronouncement and willful sweep to make the hammers ring, and to start such critics of art as Achille Delaroche to speaking of the ruins of venerable edifices on which were rising a whole esthetic world, strange, paradoxical, without defined rules, without classifications, with floating and inexact boundaries, but all the richer, intenser and more powerful because it is without limits and capable of stirring the human being to the very innermost and secret fibers of this spirit. There was plenty to say. Gauguin was the painter of primitive natures: he loved them and possessed their simplicity, their somewhat awkward and angular naïveté, their suggestion of the hieratic. Treated in his way color, which as well as music is vibration, attained to what is most general and therefore most vague in nature: its inner force. It was quite logical, according to this run of criticism, therefore, quite logical that in the state of feeling then regnant, color should, little by little, take the place of design, which in its suggestive value would then fall to the second place.

Side by side with the criticism grew the Gauguin legend that his son speaks of so bitterly in the preface to this volume, the half-myth of that excellent business man and paterfamilias who overnight shed his respectable skin, became a painter and lit out for the free isles in a Western ocean. In 1919 the appearance of Mr. Somerset Maugham's novel "The Moon and Sixpence"—facile and effective tosh—set the final stamp on this green legend.

This translation of the journals, so admirably done by Mr. Van Wyck Brooks, first appeared some fifteen years ago, but in an edition variously limited as to numbers and circulation and as variously drawn upon by writers on Gauguin. The free view now offered in this edition does nothing very much to spoil the legend. There are the same headstrong bits of perverse exaggeration; the salty items; the sex bravura; the business of the indecent picture nailed up over the door to keep out the respectable people, so insupportable; the half-posed esthetic statement. The Tahiti natives are still ardent, free and teeming along with their flora and fauna. The son's preface tells us that the complete release of these journals has been permitted only after his mother's death. Apart from that, M. Emil Gauguin, I fear, underestimates what it takes these days for a man to disgrace himself. Most of this business of Gauguin, though it proves at times annoying face to face, and infuriating to certain officials, perhaps, or persons who have to shoulder the responsibility in this world, proves in this book just now to seem fairly silly and tiresome—naughty stale beer.

Thus, after a fashion, a reputation can be got into the wind. But what remain finally are permanent qualities of virtue. These in the opinion of many, time has convincingly pronounced for Gauguin's painting at its best. And ironically enough what stands out as good, and very good indeed in the journals, more than enough to make the book worth reading, is not the adolescent or untidy crudities in effects or sentiments. It is at bottom the outlines given to his thoughts and feeling and conveyance of the objective world. Here there is great beauty and freshness of line, to say nothing of the almost startling clarity he can get into statements both wayward and concise.

It might be a surprise—but not really if we look well at the face in that portrait he painted of himself—to discover that among the very best parts of the book is that dealing with the days of his family in Peru. It was at the house of his mother's great uncle, Don Pio de Tristan de Moscoso, of an Aragonese family. This final and lucid scene, the town, the Latin family life, I have never found, not even in Alarcón, done more beautifully than here in Gauguin. Don Pio, very rich, remarried at the age of eighty, had several children by the new wife, one of them, Etchenique, for years the President of Peru, and died at 113. There are several pages to this Lima passage. The combinations are so expressive, the details, literal, almost harsh, tender, beautiful, are conveyed so sensuously and justly, that to quote single sentences would not be fair. Keeping

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it up would of course be quite another matter, but what there is is as good as Alarcón, though Gauguin would pretend he was merely amusing himself. STARK YOUNG.

Bearded Ladies

THE CIRCUS, or better, the sideshow, has come to town and pitched its tent in the Museum of Modern Art. Called an exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism, it comprises together with creations by Dürer, Hieronymus Bosch, the douanier Rousseau, Picasso, O'Keeffe, the cubistic Duchamp, Dove, Roy and several other artists, a congeries of third-rate marvels.

Instances of half the anomalies among the plastic media and forms stand against or hang upon its walls. There are reliefs in "painted jigsawn" and planking; and sculptures combining wood, stone and plaster; and collages and montages and frottages; and painted cardboard with cut-outs; and clay reliefs from which silk tassels and other objects dangle. There are "ready-mades"—combinations of manufactured objects; and roto-reliefs—designs which, pasted on phonographic discs and, set in motion, describe voluptuous gyrations; and coils of rope on stained compo-board; and tremulous and rotary Caldermobiles. Certain of the pictures present biaxially composite double images; some, heads composed of fruits and vegetables; others, extremely distorted perspectives; still others, ladies with bureau-drawers in the place of breasts. Much of the subject matter indeed is full of strange associations. Among the abstractions, one finds shapes simultaneously favoring ducks, ninepins and big toes; and, plentifully, poisonous color.

A few of the variants assembled in the Modern Museum are vital, coherent and important. Most of them are the equivalents of the bearded ladies and hermaphrodite calves of the country-fair side-shows: anomalies noteworthy chiefly for their freakishness. They are sorry, full of sad feeling, helpless rage and resentment, and move neither gayly, largely nor powerfully. A certain proportion seem mere fakes, arbitrary combinations of incongruous objects, without real existence. That, too, is characteristic.

What, one asks, is responsible for this dangerously close approximation on the part of an institution pretending to direct the public toward one of the great sources of life, to the dime-museum level? The devil would appear to be not so largely a taste for the sensational, as an incapacity to distinguish between the major and the minor, the quick and the dead, and among different sorts of living things. The failure to discriminate between the major and minor is patent in the museum's very inspiration to embrace, as "one of the principal movements of modern art," Dada and its offshoot surrealism—both of them movements with penchants for the variant materials. Now, neither of these movements is sufficiently essential and significant and comprehensive—not at least in its plastic manifestations—to come within the scope of a museum intended to educate the public's feeling. Dada indeed was anti-art. It was the startling continuation, by a number of hurt and embittered, or possibly merely lazy and envious artists, of the world's perennial effort to belittle art and dismiss it. Like the tormented scorpion in de Vigny's poem, these sadistic painters turned their darts against themselves. As for surrealism—by which we understand an indefinite, contemporary tendency toward an inordinately temperamental art—*its* fruits are largely secondary feelings and experiences, and incompletely worked-out and less than important ideas. And its ranks include more dead than quick.

The most complete and significant of the painters commonly called surrealists probably is Klee. He has simplicity, he has rhyme and a poetic sensibility. But his product is minor, a representation of preponderantly slight, special and nostalgic feelings and experiences. The rest seem even less complete and significant and apprehensive of the main forces, directions and objects of life. There is Miro, with his abrupt rhythms—apparently the least conscious of all in the movement claiming to paint during states of "extreme irrational spontaneity" and at the compulsion of hallucinatory ideas. There is Ernst, with his individual venomous color, his little *fleurs du mal;* and at an even lower level of accomplishment, Dali, whose dinky product wears the smirk of the smart-aleck; and even farther down, Chirico, a bad painter, author of numerous pathetically sincere but inorganic, dead canvases based on the theatre and dramatizing scenery instead of persons. Near or below the vanishing line, are Arp, Tanguy, Masson and most of the others. Yet, hear the barker of the Museum, in its official catalogue. "One of the principal movements in modern art! A serious affair and—for many, more than an art movement: it is a cause to which some of the most brilliant painters and poets of our age are giving themselves with consuming devotion!"

As for the Museum's failure to distinguish between different kinds of living things, *that* is displayed by its association along with live surrealism in the present show, of the fantastic and visionary art of the past. The association is intended to establish the modern movement's lineage; precisely as the similar inclusion of the work of children and of the insane, of folk and commercial and journalistic art, and miscellaneous objects with a surrealist character, is intended to establish its contemporary connections. But no actual parallelism exists between the old fantastic, visionary art and that of the superrealists: even though Dali, like Archimboldo, has painted biaxially composite double images, and Ernst, like Bracelli and Larmessin, is given to animating the inanimate. In the first place, the fantasies of the old masters were deliberate, impulsive. Those of the surrealists are or pretend to be products of states of irrational spontaneity and compulsions. In the second, the old hellish and apocalyptic "visions" were symbolic of commonly entertained and thoroughly felt, known and minutely worked-out ideas: "a poetry," to adapt Lautréamont's saying, "made by all, not one." Those of the contemporary group are symbolic of private and frequently incompletely apprehended ideas with the look of having been considerably pieced out with guesswork, and in many instances, achieved by sheer fabrication.

Invariably amused by all that is "hairy, one-armed, bisexual and gone with the wind," the great childish public of course finds the show vastly entertaining. It is none the less devoutly to be regretted. Among the Museum's visitors, there inevitably will be many young persons sincerely curious about art but unfamiliar with its nature, object and scope. They will derive a false impression of them from this collection. PAUL ROSENFELD.

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The Bandwagon

But even in quarters that still retain their former liberalism and sympathize with Mr. Ossietzky's personal fate doubt is expressed as to the wisdom of the award, which is held to distort the idea of the peace prize into a pacifist prize. It was predicted that countries now hailing this blow in the face of the Hitler regime will come to regret it because of the encouragement it will give their own peace-at-any-price fanatics.—*From a Berlin dispatch to The New York Times.*

We have always had our poor. Just like "heat and cold" everything has its opposite. The rich would become too smug without poverty around to remind them of their duties to the poor, but they are on the other hand an incentive to the poor to better their condition. The rich have a grave responsibility.—*From a letter to the editor of The Denver, Col., Rocky Mountain News.*

Allied Patriotic Groups Indorse Clean Ballot.

"It is perfectly grotesque to deny place on the ballot to convicted felons while making no objections to communists," said Francis H. Kinnicutt, attorney and president of the Allied Patriotic Societies.—*The headline and part of the contents of a news article in The New York Sun.*

Solving the unemployment problem is a spiritual, rather than an economic task.—*Philip A. Benson, president of the Dime Savings Bank, quoted in The Brooklyn Daily Eagle.*

NAME ANY THREE

We went through a severe campaign last fall and suffered a tremendous defeat, if we count only the electoral and popular vote. But there are other things to consider.—*John D. M. Hamilton, quoted in The Chicago Daily News.*

ALL IS MADE CLEAR

Between renunciation of the throne and marriage with the twice-divorced Mrs. Wallis Warfield Simpson, Edward chose the latter.—*The New York Times.*

For the last three seasons he has shot grouse as the guest of J. P. Morgan at Gannochy Moors in Scotland.

Yet these things may easily give an erroneous impression of him. He is in reality as serious as a Methodist parson. —*News item in The New York Times.*

ADD: DEFINITIONS OF DEMOCRACY, COMMUNISM, SOCIALISM AND FASCISM

Communistic or socialistic democracy is an upheaval of the unfit against attempts at order. . . . Inasmuch as the European nations are incapable of living in a chronic state of disorder, they will make attempts at enforced order, or fascism.—*From an article by Dr. C. G. Jung, quoted in The Living Age.*

PAYABLE IN STAGE MONEY?

Pending hearing tomorrow, a temporary injunction is holding up payment of $21,507 to members of the House for train fare for trips they did not make to Columbus from July 22 to December 5, while the Legislature was technically in recess but did not actually meet.—*News item in The Columbus, Ohio, Citizen.*

CORRESPONDENCE

A Peruvian Poet in Jail

SIR: I received the enclosed letter yesterday via air mail from Lima, Peru. The original was written in French. The poet referred to is E. A. von Westphalen, a Peruvian who has published prose and poetry in all the significant Latin American magazines. Until recently he was editorially associated with Bolivar, a revolutionary publication in Madrid. I am ill and unable to carry out the suggestions his friends make. Will you please see that this plea receives publication in your magazine?

NORMAN MACLEOD.

New York City.

[ENCLOSURE]

Lima, November 30, 1936.

SIR: Our friend the poet Westphalen has been arrested. Do something for him, draw up a protest and have it signed by the intellectuals; arouse public opinion. We have fallen under the most complete tyranny, and Westphalen, who is not even a member of the Communist Party, has found himself arrested under the simple accusation of being a spy; he is going to stay the devil knows how long locked up in the *Intendencia* with common-law prisoners. After Westphalen, another; we, the intellectuals who have not sold ourselves to the press, run our chances each day, we ask ourselves anxiously when our turn to sojourn with the rats, the bedbugs and the fleas in the dungeons of the government will come; the overcrowded prisons where people are tortured—for to be sympathetic toward the Madrid government is a crime sufficiently great to make you perish in the prisons or in the penal colonies of *Fronton* or *Satipo*.

Comrade, come to our aid. Write in the journals of the United States what is happening in this country, present your protest to the Peruvian Legation, and in every Latin American Consulate.

Thank you. I do not dare sign this letter, for one risks going to the devil if they should open this. Censorship has been placed on cablegrams, correspondence, cinema and literature.

We must keep Westphalen from *Satipo*, where they massacre the prisoners.

"Rationalizing a Civil War"

SIR: Mr. Bliven's doctrine in "Pacifism: Its Rise and Fall" [The New Republic, November 18] was not quite explicit, but it seems to me to be that while the World War which was international was "senseless, idiotic . . . a mere blind tropism," a civil war, fought by the "working masses" and the upholders of human rights, against "savage Nazism" or its like, may be not only justifiable but even indispensable to the attainment of "a world fit to live in." He interprets the peace movement of youth as referring only to war against foreigners, and even finds in that movement evidence that young men and women are becoming aware of the "desperate sacrifice" that may be required of them in fighting a "fascist tyranny" after they abandoned "non-resistance."

Mr. Bliven mentions a "lunatic fringe of incorrigible optimists." Pacifists that are excessively optimistic may perhaps be cured by

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reading Mr. Bliven's article. It is surprising and discouraging to read in such a journal as The New Republic, from such a wise man and usually clear thinker as Mr. Bliven, such a plea for willingness to engage in civil war. This plea is the counterpart of The New Republic's call to the nation in 1917 to enter the World War. The New Republic's support of that "tropism" at the time of it admonishes that it is not only dictatorships that may "nurture and shape the emotional attitude of a population." That may be done just as well by a democratically elected President, by a highly esteemed "journal of opinion," by—God save the mark—"Christian" ministers and other well meaning but muddled makers of public opinion. It was done to the Devil's taste in this country in 1917. What is now seen to have been "senseless, idiotic" was then with practical unanimity esteemed necessary and noble.

But the rationalization of a civil war is not so easy. General von Bernhardi, and other exponents of the philosophy of force, while holding that collective homicide between nations is a cause of progress—through the law of struggle and the survival of the fittest—never tried to defend collective homicide within a nation. Mr. Bliven will find that he has undertaken a difficult task.

In comparison with the killing of 200,000 persons in the Spanish general insanity, the mountainous hatred of fellow countrymen that has accompanied and will long outlast the conflict, and the enormous destruction of the products of labor and skill and artistic genius, it makes but a trifling difference which side proves victorious in arms.

"Non-resistance" is a misnomer. It does not mean passive acceptance of injustice, but the overcoming of evil with good instead of retaliating in kind, evil for evil. Super-resistance would be a truer term. The triumph of truth over error, of common sense and good will over madness and bitterness, is the only triumph worth anything. And that triumph is not achieved by killing. . . .

HENRY W. PINKHAM.

Newton Center, Mass.

Did the Warren Plan Fail?

SIR: Despite the administration's muddled ideas on the subject, I am surprised that a writer of Mr. John T. Flynn's perception should join those commentators who assert that the Warren gold-purchase plan proved a fiasco.

History shows that during those periods of falling prices which bring on depressions the prices of basic commodities such as agricultural products and metals always decline most rapidly. Other things such as public-utility rates, transportation costs, service charges of all kinds and wages of organized labor, which we may term "administratively" set prices, decline much more slowly if at all. The effect of devaluing a currency is always most noticeable in increased prices of basic commodities, and therefore tends to bring values of agricultural and mineral products, real estate, etc., back to their normal relationship with other values. This proved true in thirty-three countries which revived agriculture, trade and industry by increasing the price of gold.

Probably a misunderstanding regarding this important point is responsible for the contention that our gold-purchase plan proved a failure. Now it must be remembered that prices of finished goods had not suffered a fall comparable to those of basic commodities. Therefore they could not be expected to show a comparable rise, and hence the upward movement of the *general* index of wholesale prices is *a wholly improper yardstick* with which to gauge the effectiveness of an increase in the price of gold in producing the results predicted by its advocates.

From March, 1933, when we embargoed gold, to July, 1933, business activity increased at the fastest rate in our history. From 40 percent below normal it shot upward to within 13.5 percent of normal, a rise of nearly 45 percent. The price of thirty basic commodities rose by 54 percent, employment increased by 22 percent and payrolls by 39 percent. And a considerable increase in security values took place.

The probable counteracting influence of the NRA at this point should not be overlooked, for within three months after its inauguration business had dropped 20 percent below the high of July 1. Nevertheless, within one year of the date on which we left the gold standard and gradually raised the price of gold by 69 percent, basic commodity prices had risen by 67 percent. And it should be borne in mind that there had as yet been no opportunity for agricultural legislation to affect the price of such farm products as corn, wheat and cotton.

Especially in the Northeast (where the net effect of the AAA was higher prices for purchased poultry and dairy feeds), Mr. Roosevelt's failure to effect a closer approach to the farm price levels of 1926, through additional increases in the price of gold, was most disappointing to agriculture. Once this was accomplished, it was expected by such leading farm organizations as the National Grange, the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Coöperative Council that he would take steps to set up a permanent nonpartisan monetary authority, thus redeeming his pledge to establish "a dollar which will not change its purchasing and debt-paying power during the succeeding generation." Such a monetary authority would prevent either disastrous inflation or deflation by raising or lowering the price of gold in accordance with fluctuations in a carefully devised price index—a method substantially the same as that by which Great Britain manages her currency.

RICHARD E. WILLIAMS.

Fairport, N. Y.

[Precisely by what mechanism does a change in the monetary price of gold affect prices of commodities? The most direct effect is upon those things sold in foreign trade, through the shift in the exchange values of currencies. If, for instance, the pound sterling and the dollar are both linked to gold at such values that a pound is worth five dollars, and then the gold value of the dollar is cut in half without any change in the value of the pound, the pound becomes worth ten dollars. The immediate result is that people who have pounds can buy twice as many American goods for their money, while people who have dollars will have to pay twice as much for British goods as before. If, then, British demand for American goods increases because of the lower price at which they can be bought in pounds, the tendency will be for those goods exported to England to rise in dollar prices in this country. Likewise, if American demand for British goods does not decrease, those goods will cost more in this country than before.

These effects operate initially only upon exported and imported goods; they are likely to be slow and uncertain in their influence upon prices in general. They are much less important, for instance, in the case of a country like the United States, in which the percentage of foreign trade is small, than in the case of a country like Great Britain or Sweden, in which it is large. Another point of importance is that they do not enlarge trade or prosperity as a whole; they merely give a competitive advantage in exports to the devaluating nation. This may lead to a competition in devaluation; if everybody devalues, and by the same percentage, the situation is the same as before devaluation.

Internally, the effect of devaluation is much more remote. Under modern banking and monetary systems, gold is used only for bank reserves. Devaluation merely increases the possible amount of money and credit that *may* be issued against a given amount of gold. But the extra money and credit are not necessarily issued; that depends upon the demand for them by industry and government, and upon banking policy. Reserves in the United States have been ample all through the depression; they did not limit credit before devaluation. Therefore devaluation has not yet had any direct effect on prices through the internal route.

All the price changes that Mr. Williams cites have had other causes than devaluation—causes such as anticipatory speculation, the AAA and the 1934 drought, the NRA and, behind all, the government's policy of borrowing and spending. Our devaluation can best be defended, not as a positive measure, but as a defense against foreign deflationary influences in view of the expansionist credit and spending policy of the administration.

From these facts it is obvious that changes in gold value of the dollar cannot alone stabilize prices. Mr. Williams is in error in supposing that Great Britain manages her currency by this method. What she does do is to stabilize foreign-exchange rates; internally, her credit policy is far more important, and her greatest banking authorities would deny that this is managed with much regard to a price index.—THE EDITORS.]

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Pushkin and His Translators

SIR: It was indeed a surprise to read in your esteemed magazine on December 9, 1936, the statement, in Mr. Edmund Wilson's article on Pushkin, that no translator "had ever attempted any of his longer pieces in English" . . . and a little further on, "failing any translation we have tended to associate him vaguely with Byronism."

Nothing could be farther from the facts. As early as 1881 Lieutenant-Colonel Spalding published his English translation of Pushkin's celebratel novel in verse, "Evgeni Onegin"; the plot is familiar to hundreds of readers. This delightful English version may be read at the Boston Public Library and at the Library of Congress.

In 1935 Professor Oliver Elton of Oxford, one of the best known Russian scholars of the English-speaking world, published "Verse from Pushkin and Others." This contains several long excerpts from "Evgeni Onegin," selections from "Poltava" and from "Ruslan and Ludmila," as well as five fairy tales in verse and his celebrated "The Bronze Horseman." Professor Elton's book received an enthusiastic review in The New York Times by John Cournos.

In the same year Mr. Boris Brasol, president of the Pushkin Committee in New York City, published "The Mighty Three" (Paisley Press), which includes translations of two of Pushkin's longer poems, if I remember correctly, and just recently Mr. Brasol has published "The Russian Wonderland," with translations of "Coq d'Or," "The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish" and "The Tsar Saltan." . . .

Hartford, Conn. MARY KRAMER GRAY.

SIR: Mrs. Gray misrepresents what I wrote. I did not say that the longer poems of Pushkin had never been translated. I said that "It would require *a translator himself a poet of the first order* to reproduce Pushkin's peculiar combination of intensity, compassion and perfect ease; and none has ever attempted any of his longer pieces in English."

Red Bank, N. J. EDMUND WILSON.

The Pushkin Centenary

SIR: February 10, 1937, will be the centenary of the death of the great Russian poet and father of modern Russian literature, Alexander S. Pushkin. It will be marked by public commemoration not only throughout the territory of the USSR, but in many other countries as well. For instance, in Czechoslovakia, a Pushkin celebration is planned on a large scale, under the auspices of the President of the Republic, Dr. Eduard Benes.

To commemorate this centenary of Pushkin's death in the Soviet Union a committee has been formed of fifty outstanding citizens, including six leading members of the Academy of Sciences, thirty of the best known writers and representatives of various other occupations. This committee was originally under the chairmanship of the late Maxim Gorky. At present the committee is engaged in the preparation of a public event which is planned on an extensive and elaborate scale throughout the Soviet Union.

In the United States the American Pushkin Committee, which is headed by Robert Frost, is preparing appropriate commemoration in New York and in several other centers. An exhibition of the works of Pushkin, both in English and Russian, will be shown in the New York Public Library. Lectures, symposia and radio programs are contemplated. A special memorial publication is being planned. Also a memorial concert and meeting is being arranged to take place in New York in February.

Universities, colleges, poetry societies and other institutions that may be similarly planning to commemorate the centenary of Pushkin's death are hereby asked to communicate their plans to us at Room 1203, 56 West Forty-fifth Street, New York City.

New York City. AMERICAN PUSHKIN COMMITTEE.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Our recent reference to the United States Chamber of Commerce State Compact Report was unfair in that it gave the impression that the Chamber recommended state compacts, though actually it merely recommended consideration of the subject, Eustace Seligman writes from New York City.

An advertisement in The New York Sun asking that some member of the Chamber of Commerce give the advertiser a job to take him off the WPA, since the Chamber demands the liquidation of the WPA, is sent us by the advertiser himself.

We have received the latest issue of The Rural Worker, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City, which informs us that it is now the official paper of six of the thirty A.F. of L. unions coöperating with the National Committee of Agricultural and Rural Workers. The editors believe the paper will interest our readers and offer a sample copy to any reader wishing one.

Another protest against the recent article on Commonwealth College in Liberty magazine comes to us from Earl Wilson of Mena, Arkansas.

Albert Hirst, the chairman of the board of directors of the American League to Abolish Capital Punishment, urges our readers to support bills now pending in many state legislatures to exempt boys and girls under twenty-one from the death penalty.

Representative Samuel B. Pettengill of Indiana disagrees with the views on the Supreme Court expressed by his fellow Representative Maury Maverick in the latter's article in The New Republic for November 25. Representative Pettengill thinks that amendment is the way to attain such legislation as the Supreme Court has invalidated, rather than more liberal interpretation by the Court.

Greater provision for adult education by the extension of WPA projects of this kind is highly desirable, Mark Starr of New York City writes us.

John W. Wilson, principal of the Jordan High School of Long Beach, California, sends us a copy of a reply to the request of Hearst's Los Angeles Examiner that he personally approve a students' Roosevelt Inaugural Tour Competition. Mr. Wilson says that, although he cannot speak for the Board of Education, in his own opinion any support he might give would imply an endorsement of Hearst policy, and moreover he does not believe the campaign is inspired by any desire to help school children, but is an effort to recoup subscriptions lost because of that policy.

Roger H. Coffee of San Francisco writes to take issue with Abraham Epstein's "Life Insurance: Business or Racket" in The New Republic for October 28. Mr. Epstein said agents "always try to sell endowment policies rather than straight life or term-insurance policies because the commissions are larger"; Mr. Coffee says the commissions are smaller. . . . Another critic of Mr. Epstein, C. P. Van Truen of Atlantic City, remarks that "life insurance is at best a complex business, and a safe conclusion to come to is that the men engaged in that business understand it best, and the business is in the hands of careful and conservative men who strive to do what is just and fair to policy-holders."

Charles Emmett Trimble of Southtown, Texas, believes Secretary Henry A. Wallace's article in The New Republic for December 2 was so important and constructive that the Department of Agriculture should commission us to publish it as a pamphlet and circulate it to the progressive farmers of the nation.

What's on the Air

Cosmic rays will be described and made audible to listeners by Dr. Clyde Fisher, director of the Hayden Planetarium in New York City, on "Drama of the Skies" program. Saturday, January 2, 4:30 P.M., CBS.

Students and professors at Northwestern University participate in a free-for-all discussion of the question, "Would You Benefit from Fascism?" Monday, January 4, 10:30 P.M., CBS.

John G. Winant, chairman of the Social Security Board, will discuss the outlook for social security in 1937. Wednesday, January 6, 10:30 P.M., CBS.

A six-year term for the President and other proposed changes will be debated in the America's Town Meeting of the Air program devoted to "The Presidency." Thursday, January 7, 9:30 to 10:30 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

Sir Josiah Stamp, speaking from London, makes an "Economic Forecast for 1937." Sunday, January 10, 1:30 P.M., CBS.

Representative Maury Maverick of Texas surveys the incoming Congress with an address, "Let's Meet the Issues." Wednesday, January 13, 10:30 P.M., CBS.

All times given are Eastern Standard.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Just "General Buonaparte"

OCTAVE AUBRY'S "St. Helena"[1] is the work of a creative antiquarian. To indulge in modern comparisons, to portray the 1815 despot in the light of 1922 or 1933 models, has not tempted him. The twentieth century scarcely exists except for relics belonging to Princess Murat or Mr. Edward Tuck, or for the little olive tree set out in 1925 by the Prince of Wales at the empty grave in St. Helena. The Revolution, so fiercely reborn today, is for M. Aubry but a springboard for Empire, for a new hierarchy.

He writes in costume, that of Marchand or Gourgaud, or any other uncynical devotee of the great gangster. The scandal that makes the burden of the narrative is not certainly the enormity of the Corsican's crimes, but the crime of his imprisonment. A Modern, trapped by reactionary kings, and slowly put to death by their villainous, untactful English jailer! The theme echoes Napoleon's boast:

> My body is in your power but my soul is free. It is just as courageous as when I was master of Europe. Europe will later be the judge of the treatment that is being inflicted on me. The shame of it will rebound on the English people. . . . Dying on this ghastly rock I bequeath the disgrace of my death to the Royal Family of England.

To the Europe of 1936 St. Helena is probably the least of England's atrocities. Yet if M. Aubry's theme is naïvely obsolete, his genius for recreating atmosphere, salt waves and tropical flowers, and for recalling voices, gestures, angers and bitter laughter, does make live again the fantastic drama of that island—a stage used by just a handful of actors, for a brief six years of Western history. Gradually one falls under the spell. The contemporary scene begins to fade, with its bakelite, aluminum and chromium steel. A demoded category becomes distinct and familiar —walls hung with yellow nankeen bordered with a red-flowered paper, a silver wash basin, gold dressing case, watch chain braided from a Queen's hair, military camp bed with green taffeta curtains, white satin hangings fringed with gold lace, violet velvet pall sown with gold bees, crowned N's in the corners, and always blue Sèvres and innumerable little boxes and miniatures set with precious stones. All this décor sailing the Atlantic two months at a time, to maintain a court for the most illustrious social climber of history, chained finally to an unfashionable rock below the Equator halfway between the Cape and Brazil! And then all of it packed up to sail back again to museums and auctions.

They had time on their hands, these courtiers and keepers of Napoleon, and a sense of historic obligation, to record the very ticking of the hours that passed in his service. M. Aubry hints at entries too "spicy," language of the Emperor's too "foul" to preserve; and one regrets that as usual the marvelous improper past has to be diluted at the discretion of the pedant. But at least this writer being a Frenchman is no prude, and even prefers Buonaparte's Latin vulgarity to the inhuman decorum of the English. In what he allows us of truth two *motifs* take shape. The age-old war between the Mediterranean and the North Seas is carried on in miniature on this island, the victory belonging to the vanquished by virtue of scorn and wit. Napoleon looms in the book, petty, greedy, tiresome, endearing and majestic, especially in death, the ultimate judge. A super-criminal, so unfaltering that even on the verge of disintegration he is not aware of his wickedness; merely of the setting of a star!

The other revelation, even more valuable, clarifies the Napoleonic impulse. For, what had sparked this drama between a single egotist and a whole continent but just this —the romance of "breaking in," of forcing entrance into dynastic circles and imposing sovereignty?

> At what period was I happiest? he asked his courtiers. . . . "I believe it was at Tilsit. . . . There I was dictating terms with emperors and kings dancing attendance around me! Perhaps I really enjoyed myself most in Italy. . . . What shouts! Long live the liberator of Italy! That at twenty-five! . . . I could already see the world spinning under me as though I were being swept along on the air.

To be on top and to stay there, social supremacy—that was the reward that his genius demanded, and in the end claimed as won. Neither Waterloo nor exile entirely defeated him. He died of two cancers, perhaps interdependent; one of them was physical. The other, the mental cancer, was the loss of title—no longer Emperor, just General Buonaparte. They offered him better quarters:

> Let them send me a coffin, two bullets in the head. That's what I need. What difference whether I sleep on a mattress of velvet or one of haircloth. I am a soldier and accustomed to everything. But they put me ashore here like a convict.

A Scotchman returning from China told him that his father, a distinguished scholar, had often praised the encouragement the Emperor had given to science: "His eyes shone with a youthful light, his forehead became radiant." He listened fascinated to an account of the natives of Loo Tchoo, ruling without weapons or money. From his peak he could acknowledge such dissimilar ranges. But his own heights were not to be invaded by British "complacency."

Perhaps the English so versed in snobbery knew just that would be the death of him. To outwit them Napoleon finally sacrificed his health. Refusing to go where he was not sovereign, narrowed to his house and the little garden he and his courtiers had made to amuse themselves, he grew fat, swollen, a waxen yellow, with skin eruptions. But he died *Emperor* to the five or six who had the fortitude to stay and close his eyes—their own eyes streaming, we are told.

To ask the question which M. Aubry neglects but which his book insists on: what of today's Italian apprentice to the Corsican? Will he reach the same worldly omnipotence? "St. Helena" indicates that it is over a century too late. According to Napoleon "the pyramid stood on its point, he placed it on its base." By that act he helped to crumble pyramids. The drama then was between a Commoner and Kings. Today the conflict is more baffling—between a commoner and the common people, between a single megalomaniac and the now maniacal majority.

DOROTHY DUDLEY.

[1] St. Helena, by Octave Aubry. Translated by Arthur Livingston. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 608 pages. $5.

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Marx and Plekhanov: II

Art and Society, by George V. Plekhanov. Translated by Paul S. Leitner, Alfred Goldstein and C. H. Crout. New York: Critics' Group. 94 pages. $1.

THE FIRST of two essays in the booklet issued by the Critics' Group is shorter and less ambitious than the second; but it is a beautiful example of Plekhanov's method. Its subject is the class struggles of eighteenth-century France as revealed in the French theatre. At first, Plekhanov explains, the rule of the aristocracy was unquestioned, both on the stage and in the street. Classical French tragedy, with its stateliness and decorum and strict adherence to artificial rules, was an expression of the aristocratic standards. As the middle classes gained new power, after 1750, tragedies became less popular than middle-class sentimental comedies. This phenomenon has been observed by many French critics whose point of view was not Marxist in the least. But why was it, Plekhanov asks, that sentimental comedies lost favor and artificial tragedies regained it—and this at the very moment when the revolution was ready to explode? He answers that sentimental comedies were unable to express the heroic mood of the times. The new tragedies that took their place were classical in form, but they dealt with leaders like Spartacus and William Tell; they were revolutionary in subject matter. And—Plekhanov adds to clinch his point—French painting passed through almost exactly the same process: it was courtly with Le Brun, domestic with Greuze and heroic with David. The whole eighteenth century is an excellent illustration of Marx's theory that the history of art, when considered over long periods and wide areas, tends to parallel the curve of economic development.

The second essay is a long and generally impressive historical criticism of the doctrine of art for art's sake. That doctrine is likely to be advanced, Plekhanov says, at any time when a hopeless contradiction exists between the aspirations of artists and their social environment. Often during the nineteenth century—for example in Russia after the Decembrist revolt of 1825, and in France after the unsuccessful revolution of 1848—artists hated the ruling class but saw no hope of its being overturned; so they defended themselves from official standards by claiming that whatever they wrote or painted had absolutely no social meaning. In this way, Plekhanov tells us, they managed to achieve a limited freedom; their doctrine was successful in practice. But it ceased to be successful at a later stage in their careers, because it cut them off from human sympathies and caused them to take refuge in various illogical notions that damaged their work esthetically as well as intellectually.

Up to this point, Plekhanov's argument seems to me pretty nearly incontrovertible. If his essay had been translated five or six years ago, the American left-wing critics might have been saved an endless lot of arguments, the principal result of which has been to lead them to substantially the same position that Plekhanov had reached in 1905. Moreover, this Russian revolutionary critic has certain clear advantages over his younger colleagues in this country. His knowledge of European literature is prodigious; so too is his knowledge of general history. He has a keen time-sense that keeps him from judging the writers of 1830 by the political standards of 1905 or 1918. But still he is interested primarily in politics rather than literature; and this becomes an element of weakness when he deals with his own contemporaries.

It is in the latter part of the essay on "Art and Society" that his faults are most apparent. There he lumps together a number of French or Russian artists—cubists, mystics, futurists—and condemns them indiscriminately on the ground that they represent a decaying society. His judgment of them seems colored partly by moral preconceptions, and partly by the plain philistinism that has afflicted the socialist movement—not in the persons of the socialist leaders or the plain workers, but frequently in the party functionaries. A worse fault is that he tries to deduce an entirely too immediate connection between art and economics. And when he tells us that "the art of a decadent epoch *must* be decadent," I can imagine Marx calling him back to order and explaining to him that modern society is too complicated for such easy generalities—that one class might be rising while another decayed, and that both classes might have their representative artists.

As for the American left-wing critics, it seems to me that they have followed Plekhanov rather than Marx. But this is a subject that should and will be discussed in more detail.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

Nasty World

I Found No Peace, by Webb Miller. New York: Simon and Schuster. 345 pages. $3.

MR. WEBB MILLER, as European news manager of the United Press, is one of the top American correspondents abroad. In this book, he retells some of the important stories he has worked on, and gives a lively and disheartening picture of the world. Mr. Miller hates cruelty, hates blood. On his childhood farm in Michigan, one of his worst ordeals was to drive his father's mowing machine, which regularly ripped through a cottontail's nest, horribly mangling the young rabbits. A large part of his book is given over to the equivalent mangling of human beings by social institutions. He describes, in fascinated, morbid detail, the hanging of an insane murderer in Illinois, the bungled shooting of three Villistas in old Mexico, the hanging of another three Villistas in New Mexico, the slaughter of civilians by Zeppelin bombs in London, the wholesale massacre of World War troops at Ypres, Vimy Ridge, on the Ourcq and the Vesle, the discriminating massacre of Irishmen in Dublin, the beating up of Gandhi's Swarajists at Dharasana, the mutual blood-letting of the Foreign Legion and Riffi in Spanish Morocco. He ends with a loving, painstaking description of blood, fleas, syphilis, airplane bombs and machine-gun fire in Ethiopia. A charming bunch of people, the current generation. You ought to have Mr. Miller introduce you some time.

Three chapters are first-class journalism. In one, Mr. Roy W. Howard interpolates his final, five-star-extra explanation of the false Armistice report of November 7, 1918. This has been heavily on Howard's conscience, and he now believes he has the mystery solved. Mr. Howard received the Armistice report from Admiral Henry B. Wilson at Brest, and Admiral Wilson received it from the American Embassy in Paris, which, in turn, received it over its private wire from the Quai d'Orsay. So far everything is clear. But Mr. Howard now believes no Quai d'Orsay official ever telephoned the American Embassy. He believes that the Embassy wire was tapped by the German army's secret service, which wanted to prevent the advance of the Allies into Germany, and which correctly foresaw that once the rumor of an armistice was abroad, public opinion would force an ending of the War.

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Another first-rate chapter concerns a visit by Mr. Miller to Verdun eight years after the Armistice. One million and fifty thousand soldiers were killed there. "Even after eight years," he writes, "a few steps off the beaten path anywhere revealed pieces of skulls, bones protruding from rotted shoes, bits of rusted rifles and machine guns, shrapnel-punctured steel helmets, sodden scraps of uniform . . ." It is a magnificent, excessively gruesome job of reporting, and enough to make any reader do what Mr. Miller says he did—get drunk and stay drunk.

Mr. Miller also has an immensely moving account of the Swaraj demonstration at Dharasana, during Gandhi's march to the sea to make tax-free salt. The only European correspondent present, Mr. Miller watched Swarajists march up to the salt pans, watched native police beat them into insensibility with steel-tipped clubs, *lathi,* watched the Swaraj stretcher-bearers carry away their limp and bloody comrades, watched a second, third and fourth group march up, get beaten and be lugged away, all through a burning Indian day, until several thousand men, not one of whom had raised an arm to defend himself, lay groaning on the scorching ground.

Mr. Miller has no very firm social convictions. He spent a period in the USSR, and dismisses his visit in one noncommittal line. He is sure there is going to be a world war soon, and, though still hating blood and cruelty, he hopes to cover it. JONATHAN MITCHELL.

Rewrite

John L. Lewis: Leader of Labor, by Cecil Carnes. New York: Robert Speller. 341 pages. $2.50.

WE LEARN from the jacket that the author of this biography is one of the outstanding reporters in the country, having once asked Professor Einstein if he believed in Santa Claus and, on another world-shaking occasion, obtained a confession from one James Fish (he probably means Albert, who cut up babies in Westchester). Thus equipped by craft and background, Mr. Carnes does a most incompetent rewrite job of all newspaper clippings which mention Mr. Lewis and the coal industry. With the clippings, however, he is on safer ground than when he tries to tell what is going on about him today. Thus it appears that Mr. Lewis and Mr. William Green once held a peace meeting in Madison Square Garden; that Mr. Green has said, "the A.F. of L. has apparently not committed itself to participate in a labor party in 1940"; that the head of the machinists' union is Arthur Horton; and that the A.F. of L. and the CIO are "in a mad race to organize the steel industry." And many other interesting things.

Mr. Lewis and other labor leaders are dealt with in tabloid analyses. The chairman of the CIO has a "habit of relentlessly advancing," and he has the "dash" and "speech" of Huey Long who, Mr. Carnes assures us, "was mistakenly branded as a legislative clown." Mr. Lewis is also the "Iowa Achilles," although the author will not admit he has a possible weak spot. Then there are the "crafty David Dubinsky" and Alexander Howat, "the wily Kansan." At that, Messrs. Dubinsky and Howat fare better than Duncan MacDonald and John P. White, one-time mine-union figures, whom Mr. Carnes pronounces dead. Mr. Lewis is quoted as having confided to a friend, regarding an internal union fight: "They are smiting me hip and thigh, but right merrily shall I return the blow." If Mr. Lewis really said that, he deserves a biographer like Mr. Cecil Carnes.

EDWARD LEVINSON.

Talking United States

Mainland, by Gilbert Seldes. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 443 pages. $3.

YOU CANNOT doubt, after reading this book, that Mr. Seldes loves his country. Indeed, much of it is simply an energetic statement of his adoration, usually in terms of an elaborate attack on the writers who have not felt exactly as he does about it. But the conclusion of the polemic is both an admission that something *is,* after all, wrong in America and a vague proposal for remedying that flaw.

Now, Mr. Seldes is anything but naïve. He is a shrewd man with a considerable (though amateur's) fund of knowledge about matters political, social and esthetic. He knew very well, therefore, that his readers were not likely to be impressed by a blanket passion for the forty-eight states and their heterogeneous populations; just as they were not likely to believe that American intellectuals have been engaged in a conspiracy to "destroy" America and render it helpless before the impact of unnatural and subversive ideas. Perhaps, too, he suspected that his readers would wonder why a man who has lived more than forty years in the country of his birth and has been a successful and esteemed writer for about twenty of those years should suddenly find it necessary to declare his allegiance to the flag.

So Mr. Seldes gets to the point quickly. By "America" he means the Mississippi Valley and the Pacific, thus arbitrarily eliminating New England, the Middle Atlantic seaboard, the South and the Southwest. In fact, he eliminates more, because his description of America has no relation to California as we know it, nor to such significant centers of Middle Western culture as the Chicago of McCormick and Knox, the Terre Haute of the Browder episode, the Akron of the rubber barons and the Youngstown of steel battles. Specifically, he is talking about the Middle West of nineteenth-century Populism, of small, self-sufficient farmers and enterprising mechanics, of poorly articulated but valiant struggles for physical liberty, political democracy and economic justice in so far as they are consonant with individualism and capitalism. Is it not, to put it mildly, astonishing how far Mr. Seldes has carried Frederick Turner's thesis?

In his sharp reproaches to the intellectuals Mr. Seldes argues that they have never truly understood their country or endeavored to appreciate its values and have blamed it for not being, in one respect or another, European. It is this rage against the intellectuals for referring to European values and European ideas that is really devastating to his argument, for here he is simply refusing to acknowledge the truth. The point needs no laboring. It is impossible for Mr. Seldes to produce one significant American principle of politics, economics or literature that did not have an equivalent (usually an origin) in Europe. There are, of course, variations in practice which are genuine, but that does not prove that Europe and America are not interpenetrating cultures. And this leads us, finally, to the heart of the book. Mr. Seldes is trying to prove: one, that "America" created a new kind of democratic capitalism, which, in its unsullied state, guarantees the kind of liberty and equality that Americans desire; two, that both fascism and communism are alien ideas that won't root in our peculiar psychological soil, and if they do will destroy everything that is fine, noble and lovable here; three, that finance-capitalism is in the meantime destroying our fine, noble democratic capitalism; and four, that we ought to do something about it.

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In the process of discussing these notions, Mr. Seldes delivers himself of some very sharp and illuminating observations on American culture, industry, banking, labor, rural life, the radio, motion pictures, pioneering, politics and almost everything else likely to interest an intelligent and literate citizen. Moreover, he expounds a sincere and moving defense of liberty and an Olympian contempt for reactionary demagogues. Unfortunately, very little of all this wit and eloquence has any real bearing on his main contentions. That Mr. Seldes believes in an equitable small-scale capitalist system proves only that Mr. Seldes believes in it, not that we ever had it or can ever get it. It is doubtless courageous of him, at this late date, to line up with the elder La Follette and Mr. Justice Brandeis, but that is hardly a contribution to the realities of present social and economic struggles. Mr. Seldes knows it, too. He exposes neatly the weaknesses and absurdities of people who are arguing very much as he is, yet he offers no substitute whatever. He is clever. He won't expose *himself* to the same kind of analysis.

Mr. Seldes' book is important because it indicates the path that may be taken by those intellectuals who are reluctant to face the probable future of capitalism in the United States. It is a false and tragic path, for it leads its followers directly into the hands of the exploiters and barbarians. The reader remembers not so much Mr. Seldes' plea for freedom as his insistence that we must fight both communism and international finance to justify a semi-mystical nationalism. That sounds not merely like the priest Coughlin, but like the *Führer* Hitler.

BERNARD SMITH.

Round-Up

Rodeo: Tales and Sketches, by R. B. Cunninghame Graham. Selected by A. F. Tschiffely. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 438 pages. $2.50.

THIS IS the second collection made within a few years of the work of Cunninghame Graham, and is better than the first by virtue of being half again as long. The chief good any anthology can do is to lead its readers to make a better acquaintance with what they have sampled, and if "Rodeo" brings back into print extraordinary books like "The Ipane," or "A Vanished Acadia," or "The Conquest of the River Plate" or "Cartagena and the Banks of the Sinu," or "Moghreb el Aksa," the last a record of adventure in Mohammedan lands, near to the stature of Doughty's "Arabia Deserta" and Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom," then it will have fulfilled a useful literary destiny.

The excellences of Cunninghame Graham's writing can be analyzed; the long sentence rhythms can be spoken of, the vivid similes, the careful structure of observation that omits no important detail of a landscape or a portrait and lays emphases and luster correctly and composes foregrounds and backgrounds accurately, and the fine sententiousness, reflected probably from Moorish and Spanish speech, where literature is not left in books but is suffused through the talk of the people. Yet, this would only partly explain the effects. Cunninghame Graham was not the ordinary literary artificer to be revealed by taking apart the artifice. His mind and his life is in the writing and must be accounted for. He is like Doughty and T. E. Lawrence and W. H. Hudson, who lived so unusually that when they wrote it was both fitting and inevitable that each should become a character and, in the long run, the chief character of his books. No matter what the reason, they happened to be filled with reverence for the wonder and nobility of life in nature and animals and men; in short they had the heroic in themselves and with it could see the heroic.

In Cunninghame Graham, the sight of craven life in capitalist England and Europe exasperated this feeling until it became a conscious need, so that he looked, as if for relief, to the distant, to the past, to his memories, to animals, especially horses, and to the tenders of horses.

He was born of the Scottish aristocracy; he had a Spanish grandmother. He went out to Spanish America before he was seventeen, lived there sixteen years and married a Chilean woman of lineage; earned his living in the cattle business though he had other occupations, including that of a fencing master. He returned to Scotland to fail in a effort to rehabilitate the family fortunes. The family estate had to be sold, probably to someone "in trade." He began writing and publishing his books after his return.

He went to Parliament in 1886 as a Socialist; served a two months' jail sentence for participating in a demonstration; founded, with Keir Hardie, the Scottish Labor Party which anticipated the British Labor Party, and made his name in Parliament as a spokesman against imperialism. A reflection of his ideas may be found in such sketches as "Niggers" and "A Memory of Parnell"; his own estimate of his political effectiveness is in:

> . . . the dead remains of leagues and federations and societies mostly composed of treasurer and secretary, long-haired and stammering speakers, all with their theories of prompt regeneration for the body politic, and a collecting box to shove beneath the public's nose. . . . We raved, we ranted, and we called on Englishmen to rise, to embrace the movement and ourselves, and to comprehend that social and political emancipation was at hand and that we were the men.

This is the epitaph he himself gave to his socialism. Thereafter, the fighter for freedom looked backward rather than forward. His work became elegiac with the memory of the freedom of life in the great plains, which he himself had seen encroached upon and erased. One of the most powerful and pitiful narratives I have ever read is "A Hegira," the tale of a flight of Apache prisoners. With the death of the last fugitive, human freedom itself seems to have expired.

There is little forward look toward socialism in his writings—and less in his actions. In the World War he served the British imperialism he had scorned, as a cattle buyer in Spanish America; and he carried on friendly correspondence with Theodore Roosevelt, who had done so much to ravish the liberties of the Spanish America he loved so well. In his last years, horsemanship seems to have become a hobby; his political life had descended to crotchets. He was leader of a grotesque Scottish nationalist party.

There have been strange alliances before. Cunninghame Graham acknowledged the class struggle, here and there, and was bitterly eloquent as to trade and capitalism; but in the end we hear, louder than the natural lover of freedom, the dispossessed aristocrat voicing the traditional aristocrat's exasperation over the "trader" who has succeeded in displacing the freedom of the aristocracy with the mere freedom of trade. There is no wisdom, only hatred in this:

"Commerce, that vivifying force, that bond of union between all the basest instincts of the basest of mankind, that touch of lower human nature which makes all the lowest natures of mankind akin. . . ."

But it helps to explain why his memories followed the shrinking trails of pioneer freedom and lingered there with such passion.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

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Supplement to History

Out of My Past: The Memoirs of Count Kokovtsov, edited by H. H. Fisher, translated by Laura Matveev. Stanford University Press. 635 pages. $5.50.

MINISTER of Finance and Prime Minister, Count Kokovtsov played a prominent role in Russia during the pregnant years 1904-17. His well translated memoirs, therefore, should be of interest to students of Russian history. However, as compared with the documents —ever increasing in number—on this period, the value of memoirs is diminished unless they enliven soulless official records. This Count Kokovtsov sometimes declines to do. The story of the notorious bribes to the French press, politely dubbed "subsidies" to "strengthen Russia's political credit," constitutes an absorbing episode in the diplomatic history of Russia and France. As Minister of Finance, Kokovtsov must have known all about the affair, yet he reveals little that is new. Certain recent documents could have bolstered his faltering memory.

Graphically the author writes of the Empire as it underwent the crumbling process. The impending cataclysm, which timely measures could have averted, some men seem to have discerned. Kokovtsov himself was one of those to realize that "new conditions demand new songs and those songs need new birds to sing them." A conscientious, conservative bureaucrat, he realized the monarchy was heading toward an abyss, yet he was helpless against the court camarilla topped by Rasputin. Few recollections present a more pathetic figure than that of the Emperor, who, despite "superficial faculties" and mental torpor, found himself at the helm of an empire passing through an unprecedented crisis. Regardless of the many illuminating details, these memoirs will be consulted mainly as a supplementary source rather than as a sole guide to an understanding of this engrossing period of Russian history.

ANATOLE G. MAZOUR.

Alcestis from the Grave

The Alcestis of Euripides: An English Version by Dudley Fitts and Robert Fitzgerald. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 93 pages. $1.25.

THE PROBLEM of translating the verse drama of the Greeks has become in recent years a largely negative one. It consists in eradicating the effects of Gilbert Murray. Since Eliot in "The Sacred Wood" published his excoriation of that translator's Swinburnian hellenism ("he who has sapped our soul and shattered the cup of all life for Euripides"), the opportunity for poets to improve the situation has been wide open. Small use has been made of it, and only Yeats's versions of Sophocles offer a master's example. Yet by slow degrees the critical attention to translation has infected poets, and now this discipline has joined forces with another—the recent attempt in England and America to revive a poetic drama that is actable and credible on the modern stage. The first two results of this ambition are encouraging. Louis MacNeice in England has rendered "Agamemnon," and here we have an American "Alcestis."

The two translators of the "Alcestis" have combined a proper humility before their task with an obvious study of poetic dramatists and translators like Pound and Eliot, Yeats and possibly Synge. They tolerate no overlay of verbal or material elaboration, and they are particularly suspicious of the declamatory pomp that is the bane of verse plays in any age. They are, in fact, so conscious of the "Victorian incubus" that their lines often reduce the swelling lucidity of Euripides to limpness; they insist on a cadence too consistently elegiac, too dying in its fall, and induce a tonal pallor where a stricken clarity would be more literal and dramatic. In a "Commentary" they offer some defenses that only the crusted fogyism of two generations back would require, but they also change the Chorus of men to one of women, divide it into singing and dancing members, suppress the speeches of the child Eumelus, and stylize matters somewhat unduly when they furnish Alcestis with a mask.

These liberties are more debatable in production than in print. What counts here is the visualizing poignance of the verse, its sincerity and music (especially in the odes and three lyric passages), its encouragement to actors to make Euripides an occasion for active grief and pathos, not for the futile strain and banality with which the stage usually augments the fustian English of stage classics. Modern imitations of Renaissance verse drama have almost invariably failed. The recent plays of Yeats and Eliot show that the Greek model is perhaps the truest source of a modern poetic theatre. This translation, made for actual production, is one of the first successful examples of what collaboration between the poet and the historic theatre may produce in correcting much aimless experiment and floundering among those who are trying to make the poetic drama more than a matter of pious hope and ineptitude.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL.

Books in Brief

William Morris As I Knew Him, by Bernard Shaw. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. 52 pages. $1.50.

THIS IS an entertaining little memoir of Morris. Shaw worked with him as a socialist and enormously admired him, and fell in love with his daughter. Morris's poetry, Shaw says, was "done with a natural facility that cost him nothing but the manual labor of writing it down. He was surprised when, in his college days, he was told that this gift constituted him a poet." But his socialist agitation demanded effort and pain: "It is true that there was no lack of practised and even powerful speakers in the movement, spouting Marxism, Fabianism and all the other brands; but not one of them could propagate his vision of the life to come on a happy earth, and his values that went so much deeper into eternity than the surplus value of Marx. This vision only he himself could propagate; and so he had to go to the street corner even though he was thoroughly miserable there, and to think out and write out for delivery in public halls lectures which were far too pregnant and profound to be extemporized as Hyndman and I and the rest extemporized." This essay, characteristically bright and clear, suggests that Shaw might be well employed writing memoirs. He is nowadays better on the past than on the present.

E. W.

General Smuts, by Sarah Gertrude Millin. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 470 pages. $3.50.

This final volume of Mrs. Millin's biography opens in 1917 when Smuts joined the Imperial War Cabinet and closes with him in the position he holds today, Deputy Prime Minister in the Coalition Government of South Africa, under his old opponent, General Hertzog. Like its predecessor, this volume is competent and authoritative; it is marked by the same open, but not uncritical, admiration for its sub-

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ject. Mrs. Millin treats in considerable detail Smuts's contribution to the plan of the League of Nations, his work on the reparations clauses of the Versailles Treaty and his final repudiation of the Treaty, which was probably the outstanding liberal action of his life. She devotes also a chapter to his philosophy of Holism and notes the ironic fact that his belief in the free or Holistic personality, as the "highest achievement of which any human being is capable," breaks down completely in the face of the African native problem. This is only one of many ironic inconsistencies in the man she believes to be great, but of whom she writes acutely: "His platitudes jostle his profundities." The record shows the platitudes rather outweighing the profundities and strengthens the impression given in the first volume that Smuts's greatness is, in part, an invention mothered by British imperial necessity. M. G.

Contributors

ARTHUR E. MORGAN, chairman of the board of directors of the Tenessee Valley Authority, was president of Antioch College for eleven years. His lifelong interest in biological research has resulted in experiments and studies in various biological problems in connection with the TVA.

H. N. BRAILSFORD, London correspondent for The New Republic, has written numerous books and articles dealing with world affairs.

PAUL ROSENFELD, the author of a novel, "The Boy in the Sun," and numerous books and pieces of musical and other esthetic criticism, is now completing a second novel.

DOROTHY DUDLEY has published "Forgotten Frontiers: Dreiser" and "The Land of the Free"; "Venus," translated from the French of Auguste Rodin; "Mussolini Red and Black" from the French of Armando Borghi, as well as poems and articles in various magazines.

JONATHAN MITCHELL, who is well known to the readers of The New Republic for his articles on politics and current events, lives in Washington, D. C.

EDWARD LEVINSON, labor editor of The New York Post, has published a book on the history of professional strike-breaking called, "'I Break Strikes': The Technique of Pearl L. Bergoff."

BERNARD SMITH has contributed essays and reviews to periodicals in this country and abroad. He is completing a history of American criticism.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER, who was this year awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for the second time, is the author of two volumes of verse and two novels.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL, the editor of Poetry: A Magazine of Verse, is at present preparing a collection of criticism called, "Literary Opinion in America."

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Edmund Wilson and Martha Gruening.

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